

THE CHALLENGES OF ADOPTING MISSION
COMMAND PHILOSOPHY IN THE ARMENIAN ARMED FORCES

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ABSTRACT

THE CHALLENGES OF ADOPTING MISSION COMMAND PHILOSOPHY IN THE ARMENIAN ARMED FORCES, by Major Davit N. Aleksanyan, 123 pages.

At the beginning of 2017, Armenia's Defense Minister confirmed the determination to adopt the culture of mission command "as the main command philosophy." Although there is a desire among Armenian Armed Forces high officials to adopt the decentralized style of command, the specific challenges and necessary conditions of adopting the philosophy of mission command have not been identified. This thesis examines the principles of the mission command philosophy as practiced in the US Army and determines the barriers that the Armenian Armed Forces may encounter during the mission command philosophy's implementation process. The result of the analysis shows that the Armenian Armed Forces need several changes and reforms in order to implement a decentralized style of command. In this case, the U.S. example of mission command philosophy is the most appropriate for the Armenian Armed Forces that can be used as a base model. Also, this thesis recommends options that the Armenian Armed Forces may use to overcome identified challenges.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE THESIS APPROVAL PAGE	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
ACRONYMS.....	viii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
Background.....	2
Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict	3
Diplomatic relations.....	5
The development of the Armenian Armed Forces.....	10
Reforms in the Armenian Armed Forces	12
Military Education	14
Current disposition of the Armenian Armed Forces.....	17
Primary and Secondary Research Questions	19
Assumptions.....	20
Definitions of Key Terms	20
Scope.....	25
Limitations and Delimitations	25
Significance	26
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	27
Introduction.....	27
U.S. Army Doctrine of Mission Command (ADRP 6-0)	27
The Origins of Mission Command: <i>Auftragstaktik</i>	36
US Army adoption of Mission Command	43
Summary	50
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	52
Introduction.....	52
Research Method	52
Data collection	53
Data analysis	54
Limitations	55

CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS	56
Introduction.....	56
Building cohesive teams through mutual trust	57
Creating shared understanding.....	62
Provide clear commander's intent	66
Exercise disciplined initiative	68
Use mission orders.....	72
Accept prudent risk	73
The Battle of Biazza Ridge (Case Study)	76
Capturing Eben-Emael (Case Study).....	81
Operation “Wedding in the Mountains” (Case Study)	89
Summary	95
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	96
Conclusions.....	96
Recommendations.....	103
BIBLIOGRAPHY	108

ACRONYMS

AAF	Armenian Armed Forces
ADP	Army Doctrine Publication
ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
C2	Command and Control
COL	Colonel
DOTMLPF-P	Doctrine, Organization, Training, Material, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities, Policy
FSR	Field Service Regulation
MC	Mission command
MOD	Ministry of Defense
NCO	Non-commissioned Officer
NK	Nagorno-Karabakh
RA	Republic of Armenia
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The idea to implement the mission command (MC) philosophy in the Armenian Armed Forces (AAF) was a result of a series of reforms aimed to enhance efficiency and promote combat readiness of the forces. After the Soviet Union's collapse, the Armenian nation was compelled to create the Armed Forces to deter Azerbaijani aggression in Nagorno-Karabakh. In this critical situation, many Armenian volunteers who served in the Soviet Army played a pivotal role in forming the first units of the future AAF.

Thus, the AAF adopted a Soviet model of command. The “newborn” AAF proved its effectiveness during and after the Nagorno-Karabakh war (from 1991-94). The AAF's strongest asset is the human dimension as opposed to the technological dimension. Initially, the AAF leaders decided to overcome potential enemies with numbers of highly motivated personnel and advanced weapon systems, but eventually realized that this method was not enough. In order to “do more with less,” the decision was made to implement a new command culture known as mission command. Consequently, the human factor remains a central role to this organizational culture.

The MC philosophy in the US Army has assumed a formalized role and may be adopted by the AAF in order to maximize the human domain of warfare. Currently, the AAF is in early stages of both researching and implementing the MC philosophy. The aim of this study is to examine the US Army example of MC philosophy and identify what requirements are needed for the AAF to apply mission command philosophy. This chapter will briefly introduce the current reality of Armenia: in particular, the history, the

geopolitical situation, the diplomatic relations and the Armed Forces of Armenia will be presented.

Background

The Republic of Armenia (RA) is a sovereign, democratic country, landlocked in the Caucasus region. The RA has legislative, executive and judicial powers.¹ The neighboring countries from the north and east are Georgia and Azerbaijan, while from southeast and west is Iran and Turkey. Prior to becoming a Republic, the Nation of Armenia had a long history of gaining and losing independence. Due to geographic location and other factors, Armenia was constantly invaded by foreign rulers. As a result, the current geographical map of Armenia covers only a small part of the historical Armenia, which is known as one of earliest civilization in the world.²

The result of this long lasting struggle with neighboring states was a loss of Armenia's autonomy in the 14th century and throughout the 20th century. The partition between Ottoman and Persian Empire lasted for centuries. In the 19th century, Russia gained control of Eastern part of Armenia, while the Western part remained under the Ottoman rule.³ At the beginning of the 20th century, the Armenian Nation experienced one of the horrific tragedies of the civilized world. Around 1.5 million Armenians were massacred during the period 1915-1923 by Ottoman Turks. The survivors of Armenian

¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, "Overview," accessed 12 September 2016, <http://www.mfa.am/en/armenia-overview/>.

² Ronald Grigor Suny, "Armenia," Encyclopedia Britannica, accessed 11 September 2016, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/35178/Armenia>.

³ Ibid.

Genocide found shelter all around the world, which caused the formation of Armenian Diaspora.⁴ After about 500 years of being under foreign rule, in 1918 Armenians gained much-desired independence from Russia, which lasted only two years. In November 1920 the Republic of Armenia was forcefully transformed into the Soviet Union.⁵

At the end of the 20th century, once again, Armenian people received a right to declare their independence. The long desired independence was a result of the nationwide referendum and was officially accepted on 21 September 1991. As a result, all former Soviet countries, including Armenia, started to face social-economic problems. The devastating earthquake in Spitak (1988), and increasing tensions in Nagorno-Karabakh forced Armenians all over the world to unify and confront the challenges.⁶

Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

The severe armed conflict between former Soviet autonomous region Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) and, first with the communist powers of the USSR, later with independent Azerbaijan started in February 1988.⁷ The large-scale military actions

⁴ The Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, “Armenian Genocide,” accessed 11 September 2016, http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/armenian_genocide.php.

⁵ Ronald Grigor Suny, “Armenia,” Encyclopedia Britannica, accessed 11 September 2016, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/35178/Armenia>.

⁶ Edik Minasyan, *The Third Armenian Republic* (Yerevan: Yerevan State University, 2013), 7-11.

⁷ Sergey Minasyan, “Nagorno-Karabakh After Two Decades of Conflict: is Prolongation of the Status Quo Inevitable?” (Caucasus Institute Research Papers, Yerevan, August 2010), 5.

caused mass destruction and loss of human life from both sides.⁸ Thomas de Waal describes the origins of the conflict. According to him, the area mainly inhabited by Armenians (94 percent) and with a strong tradition of Armenian self-rule was divided from Armenia and attached to Soviet Azerbaijan in the early 1920s.⁹

The anti-Armenian policy in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Republic resulted in constant dissatisfaction from ethnic Armenians against the ruling system of Soviet Azerbaijan. During Soviet regime, these Armenians continuously hope to unify with the Republic of Armenia. In order to address their discontent with Azerbaijani rule, the Armenians made several attempts through letters and petitions to Soviet leaders, asking for Nagorno-Karabakh to be a part of Soviet Armenia. The culmination of the long lasting dispute was the referendum in NK in 1991 and declaration of independence.¹⁰

Following the proclamation of NK independence, Azerbaijan started large-scale military actions against the Armenian population of NK. The result of four years severe war was a cease-fire agreement in 1994 which, regardless of the frequent violations, is still effective.¹¹ Azerbaijani military-political officials during the peace settlement process frequently threatened to solve the conflict in military means. As a result, in April

⁸ Office to the President of the Republic of Armenia, “Nagorno-Karabakh Republic: History and Current Reality,” accessed 20 August 2016, <http://www.president.am/en/karabakh-nkr/>.

⁹ Thomas de Waal, *Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 130.

¹⁰ Minasyan, *The Third Armenian Republic*, 147.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 150-157.

2016, Azerbaijani launched a 4-day war which led to the loss of dozens of soldiers and civilians from both sides.¹² The international community, in particular, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, beginning from 1992 strives to help conflicting sides to find consensus.¹³

Diplomatic relations

In order to understand current reality and challenges of Armenia, it is important to comprehend not only Armenia's relations with neighboring countries but also relations with Russia and United States of America.

In 1991, after gaining independence from the Soviet Union, the RA established diplomatic relations with 156 countries and became a member of the United Nations (UN, 1992), and a number of other international organizations (OSCE, CSTO, CIS, Council of Europe, BSEC).¹⁴

Being blockaded by two neighboring countries—Turkey to the West and Azerbaijan to the East, the RA maintains a vitally important border with Georgia in the

¹² Natalia Bagirova and Hasmik Mkrtchyan, "Fighting Erupts in Nagorno-Karabakh, Dozens of Casualties Reported," *Reuters*, 3 April 2016, accessed 11 September 2016, <http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFKCN0WZ07R>.

¹³ Samvel Sargsyan, "Small Nations in Multinational Operations and Armenian Perspectives" (Master's thesis, Command and General Staff College, 2014), 2, accessed 12 September 2016, <http://cgsc.cdmhost.com/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4013coll2/id/3236>.

¹⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, "History: Historical Review of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs," 1 August 2010, accessed 12 September 2016, <http://www.mfa.am/en/history/>.

North and the tiny southern border with Iran.¹⁵ The absence of diplomatic relations with Azerbaijan and Turkey is directly connected with NK conflict and Turkey's denial of 1915s Armenian Genocide. Both have refused Armenia's proposal to establish diplomatic relations without preconditions, bringing out the unresolved conflict of NK.¹⁶

In 2008, with Armenia's President Serzh Sargsyan's initiative, Turkey's President Abdullah Gül was invited to watch a soccer match in Armenia, which initiated the new process named "football diplomacy." However, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey abruptly rejected to implement agreements that were aimed to normalize relations between two countries and establish diplomatic relations. Once again Ankara brought the unresolved NK question as a precondition to start relations with Armenia.¹⁷ Thus diplomatic relationships with Turkey and Azerbaijan remains unsettled.

Armenia has strived to maintain diplomatic and economic relations with both Georgia and Iran. With the conditions of blockade from Turkey and Azerbaijan, Georgia's border is a "gate" for Armenia to connect with the World. Despite the historical and economic relations between two countries, there are different approaches towards security and political issues. The degraded relations between Georgia and Russia

¹⁵ Harout Semerdjian, "Christian Armenia and Islamic Iran: An Unusual Partnership Explained," *The Hill*, 14 January 2013, accessed 13 September 2016, <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/276961-christian-armenia-and-islamic-iran-an-unusual-partnership-explained>.

¹⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, "Bilateral Relations," accessed 12 September 2016, <http://www.mfa.am/en/country-by-country/az/>.

¹⁷ David L. Phillips, "Diplomatic History: The Turkey-Armenia Protocols," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 17 April 2012, accessed 12 September 2016, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/04/16/diplomatic-history-turkey-armenia-protocols-event-3630>.

and strong military-political partnership of Armenia with Russia add frictions in Georgian-Armenian relations. Moreover, both Armenia and Georgia have a different approach to the regional ethnic conflicts. While Georgia supports the principle of territorial integrity of regional ethnic conflicts (in the case of Abkhazia and South Ossetia), Armenia supports the principle of self-determination (Nagorno-Karabakh conflict). Despite different views, the two countries continue to have friendly relations.¹⁸ Regardless of the religious difference, the RA has friendly ties with Iran. An effective cooperation in economy, agriculture, and in fields of energy brings new perspectives to tighten the relations between two states. Many intergovernmental and interdepartmental documents enable the two countries to partner in these different domains.¹⁹

The relations between Armenia and Russia has a strategic role for both countries. Strong economic ties, cooperation in the military sphere plays an important role for Armenia. Being located in the complex geopolitical region, Armenia found a solution to ensure the territorial integrity of the country with Russia's help. As a result of the bilateral agreement, Russia's 102nd base is located in Gyumri: having a primary task to secure Armenia's Western border with Turkey.²⁰ Besides enhancing security, Russia

¹⁸ Sergey Minasyan, "Armenia and Georgia: A New Pivotal Relationship in the South Caucasus," *PONARS Eurasia* no. 292 (September 2013): 1-3, accessed 13 September 2016, http://www.ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memospdf/Pepm_292_Minasyan_Sept2013.pdf.

¹⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, "Bilateral Relations," November 2012, accessed 13 September 2016, <http://www.mfa.am/en/country-by-country/ir/>.

²⁰ J. Hawk, Daniel Deiss, and Edwin Watson, "Russia Defense Report: Russian Forces in Armenia," *South Front* (16 June 2016): 1, accessed 13 September 2016, <https://southfront.org/russia-defense-report-russian-forces-in-armenia/>.

plays a significant role in Armenia's economy. This is evident as a significant sector of the Armenian economy belongs to Russian companies. Also, the Armenia is heavily dependent on the energy resources imported from Russia. Membership to organizations like Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), demonstrates this dependency. Despite this, in recent years citizen dissatisfaction toward Russia's policy led to anti-Russian attitudes in some sectors of the population. One reason was the horrific massacre of seven members of the Armenian family by a Russian soldier in Gyumri in 2015. Then, the decision to raise electricity price led to large-scale demonstrations with anti-Russian slogans in capital city Yerevan.²¹ Eventually, after "4 Day War" between NK and Azerbaijan on April 2016, Armenian officials started to condemn Russia's policy of selling the arms to Azerbaijan.²² Despite the issues mentioned above, Russia remains Armenia's close ally in the region out of necessity.

The Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs webpage states, "The United States of America is the most important partner for Armenia."²³ The U.S. Government supports Armenia to promote democracy, economic development, and social reforms, as well as regional peace and prosperity. Being a member of OSCE Minsk Group, the USA is an

²¹ Global Security, "Armenia - Relations with Russia," accessed 13 September 2016, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/armenia/foreign-relations-ru.htm>.

²² John C. K. Daly, "Armenia Clashes with Russia Over Arms Sales," Silk Road Reporters, 7 April 2015, accessed 13 September 2016, <http://www.silkroadreporters.com/2015/04/07/armenia-appeals-to-csto-over-russian-arms-sales-to-azerbaijan/>.

²³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, "Bilateral Relations," accessed 20 September 2016, <http://www.mfa.am/en/country-by-country/us/>.

effective negotiator between Armenia and Azerbaijan striving to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute peacefully. The USA also supports normal relations between Armenia and Turkey. To promote regional stability, peace, and prosperity, the United States encourages both sides to have open borders. Being the sixth largest trade partner of Armenia, the USA plays an important role in Armenia's economy.²⁴ The two countries' economic ties are bound with a number of agreements that is directed to grow trade and investment.²⁵ Military cooperation between two states started in 2000.²⁶ For Yerevan, military cooperation with the United States is one of the priorities. The cooperation includes military education, development of interoperable peacekeeping capabilities, the establishment of professional Noncommissioned Officer's Corps, reviewing the defense strategy and other issues of mutual interest. In the sphere of military cooperation, the Kansas National Guard State Partnership Program with the Republic of Armenia plays a central role. Since 2003 cooperation not only with Armenian Armed Forces but also with Ministry of Health, Rescue Services and other governmental offices and agencies played

²⁴ Sara Kojoyan, "U.S.-Armenia: American Businesses Encouraged to Invest in Armenian Economy," Armenia Now, 19 May 2016, accessed 20 September 2016, <https://www.armenianow.com/en/economy/2016/05/19/armenia-us-relations-economy-business-minister-minasyan-ambassador/3469/>.

²⁵ U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Relations with Armenia," 9 June 2016, accessed 20 September 2016, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5275.htm>.

²⁶ Global Security, "U.S.-Armenia Relations," accessed 20 September 2016, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/armenia/foreign-relations-us.htm>.

a major role in collaboration between two countries. To promote partnership and friendly relations, officials from both countries hold several exchange visits annually.²⁷

The development of the Armenian Armed Forces

The creation of the Armenian Armed Forces (AAF) is closely related to Armenia's independence and Nagorno-Karabakh's movement for self-determination. To secure the integrity, and guarantee the physical existence of Armenians in two Armenian Republics, the need to create regular Armed Forces became a prerequisite. During their short history, the AAF proved its combat effectiveness. The unannounced war in Nagorno-Karabakh ended in 1994 resulted in victory of Armenian Forces.²⁸

The "Nations Army," during its development, went through three arduous phases. The first phase lasted from February 1988 to May 1992. As tensions in Nagorno-Karabakh started to escalate, the security of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh became the key objective. Thousands of patriotic Armenians volunteered to join the AAF. This resulted in around eighty separate acting units being involved in numerous engagements. Operating mostly without centralized command these units were exceptionally effective. Nevertheless, the need to centralize and coordinate combat actions led to grouping separate units and forming the first combat regiments. Many experienced officers from the Soviet Army played a vital role in creating and leading the new units. Several military operations brought victories, with revised offensive operations. High national morale and

²⁷ Kansas Adjutant General's Department, "Adjutant General to Visit Armenia," accessed 20 September 2016, http://www.kansastag.gov/press_release_detail.asp?PRid=623.

²⁸ Minasyan, 141.

the exceptional performance of thousands of soldiers during the initial phase of the war resulted in a victory for the Armenian Forces.²⁹

The second phase commenced from 1992 and lasted until 1994. Armenia's independence laid the legal groundwork for instituting a regular Army. On 28 January 1992, the Armenian government made a decision to establish the Defense Ministry consequently, consisting of a General Headquarters, and other administrative bodies.³⁰ As a result of large-scale military activities, the AAF units under centralized command successfully established a security belt around Nagorno-Karabakh (except Shahumyan region, eastern parts of Martakert and Martuni regions), to prevent artillery shellings into populated areas. At the end of 1993, Azerbaijan launched another large-scale attack which lasted five months and ended with another Azerbaijani Army defeat. The final defeat lead Azerbaijanis political leaders to stop military activities. In May 1994, Azerbaijan, the Nagorno-Karabakh representatives, and the Republic of Armenia signed the ceasefire agreement.³¹

The last phase of AAF's development started in 1994 and continues today. During this stage, the Army went through several reforms. The result refined Army doctrine, developed a multilevel military education system, investing in new technologies, establishing and the creation of military industry.³² Since 2015, the decision was made to

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, "Historical Overview," accessed 20 August 2016, <http://www.mil.am/en/68/71/288>.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

conduct military command and staff exercises that will involve all state agencies and major infrastructure of the country annually. These improvements led to the enhancement of the country's ability to increase combat readiness.³³

Reforms in the Armenian Armed Forces

While fulfilling critical tasks for the country, since 2005, the AAF went through several reforms which significantly increased the capabilities of the army and allowed successfully defend the homeland. The adoption of the “on defense” law, and the civil service system in the Ministry of Defense are the most significant reform results. Crucial documents such as the National Security Strategy, the Military Doctrine of the Republic of Armenia and the Strategic Defense Review have also been developed and adopted as part of these reforms. Combat readiness, and an efficient, modern Armed Force are the logical outcomes of the reforms.³⁴

Since 2015 the idea to implement a culture of mission command became one of the important concepts that Army leaders adopted. Overcoming potential enemies with limited resources and relatively small forces, forced Army leaders to reconsider the current status of the Army and implement changes in all domains. The AAF's leadership proposed changes in the Army's culture, emphasizing the need for capable, intellectually mature, and independent thinking leaders. As a result, a new concept was introduced

³³ Panorama.am, “Shant-2015 Military Exercises to Be Held On September 3-6,” 2 September 2015, accessed 19 October 2016, <http://www.panorama.am/en/news/2015/09/02/shant-2015/1437426>.

³⁴ Seyran Ohanyan, “Foreword by the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia,” *Strategic Defense Review*, accessed 19 October 2016, <http://www.mil.am/media/2015/07/775.pdf>.

called “Command using task orders” which is similar to U.S. mission command’s philosophy. On his annual foreword, former Defense Minister Ohanyan mentioned that “the independent thinking commander, who can take the initiative and act resolutely during daily life, will not hesitate to make decisions during the battle.” One of the essential preconditions that he saw in this context was the ability of the commander to listen to his subordinates. Ohanyan strongly encouraged commanders at all levels to talk and discuss issues with subordinates.³⁵

Armenia's newly appointed Minister of Defense Vigen Sargsyan gave a new impetus to the reforms.³⁶ His concept of creating “Nation - Army” was aimed to enhance the proficiency of military forces, using the full intellectual potential of the nation. Several promising decisions was made to promote the democratization and cooperation with state institutions. Sargsyan emphasized the need to implement advanced technologies into the Armed Forces. His comprehensive approach towards reforms enabled Armenians from all over the world to contribute and enhance the defensive capabilities of the AAF.³⁷

³⁵ Seyran Ohanyan, *The Republic of Armenia's Minister of Defense Seyran Ohanyan's Directions to the Army Personnel* (Yerevan: Republic of Armenia MOD, 2016), 16-18.

³⁶ As of 3 October 2016, Armenia’s President Serj Sargsyan signed a decree on appointing Vigen Sargsyan, as a Defense Minister of the Republic of Armenia, replacing Sayeran Ohanyan.

³⁷ Armenpress, “We Must Move from National Army to Nation- Army,” November 2016, accessed 31 January 2017, <https://armenpress.am/arm/news/868156/azgayin-banak-karuceluc-petq-e-qayl-katarel-depi-azg-banaki.html>.

Military Education

The military education in Armenian Armed Forces also went through several reforms, which resulted in the establishment of a full-scale military education. The AAF establishment coincided with the critical events that occurred in Armenia. The economic blockade from Azerbaijan created an urgency to form an Armed Force capable of ensuring security both for the Republics of Armenia and for Nagorno-Karabakh. Even during these difficult circumstances, despite succeeding, the AAF obtained a certain uniqueness that distinguished itself from other national militaries. One of the unique facts was that many patriots volunteered for the Army and played a crucial role in forming first Army units. The second consideration was the fact that Armenia as a former Soviet republic did not have any military educational institutions.³⁸

In 1994, after signing a cease-fire agreement with Azerbaijan, Armenia started to develop the military education system. Based on Yerevan State University, the first “High Military Multi-Nature Commander College” was established, which later transformed into a Military Institute.³⁹ At the same time, the Aviation Institute and

³⁸ Seyran Ohanyan, “Development of Military Education as a Factor for Efficiency Enhancement of the RA Defense System,” *Armenian Army* (2012): 9-17, accessed 10 September 2016, https://razmavaraget.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/final-n3_2012.pdf.

³⁹ The Republic of Armenia, “Government decision number 279, accepted 24.06.1994,” accessed 10 September 2016, <http://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=5475>.

Medical Faculty at the Yerevan Medical University were opened.⁴⁰ Within a short period, the “backbone” of a Military Education system was created.

In 1997 as a result of bilateral agreements, Armenian cadets began to study at military institutions in Russia and Greece. This provided a chance to study military professions and improve the Armenian Military Educational System. Since the early 2000s, the Military Educational System has functioned well, providing higher-secondary military education to officers. The system selects young candidates from pre-service age who participate in a four-year intensive education process resulting in the commissioning of Lieutenants.⁴¹

However, the educational system was incomplete as the full-cycle military education was missing. The result was dependency from foreign partners. Another problem was a lack of research institutions. The original educational program was based on the Soviet program.⁴²

Multidimensional reforms started in 2008 with the adoption of the conceptual document “Strategic Defense Review.” The revised approach enabled a full-cycle military education in Armenia. In September 2016, the opening of the Command and Staff Department in the V. Sargsyan Military University was a major step to improve the military educational system. According to responsible officials, “the Command and Staff

⁴⁰ The Republic of Armenia, “Government decision number 447, accepted 20.09.1994,” accessed 10 September 2016, <http://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=5525>.

⁴¹ Ohanyan, “Development of Military Education as a Factor for Efficiency Enhancement of the RA Defense System,” 12-13.

⁴² Ibid.

Department provides opportunities to efficiently organize the process of training and retraining of the officers and to create infrastructural and institutional preconditions for the development of the theory of the military science.” The department includes international, national security, military, and warfare chairs.⁴³

These reforms were significant not only for the Officer Corps. An integral part of the military education system was an establishment of Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) Corps. Since 2008, the school of professional sergeants started to educate platoon, company and battalion level NCOs.⁴⁴ During the establishment of the new school, advisory visits from the Kansas State National Guard played a major role.⁴⁵

In 2005 Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) was established to perform strategic analysis in the defense-security range and present adequate deductions and make recommendations to the Armenian military-political leadership. This unique institution

⁴³ President of the Republic of Armenia, “President attended the inauguration of a new unit of the V. Sarkissian military university command and staff department,” accessed 11 September 2016, <http://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2016/09/01/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-visit-Vazgen-Sarkissian-Military-University/>.

⁴⁴ Zhirayr Amirkhanyan, “The Role of International Cooperation in Reforming the Systems of Military Education and Personnel Management of the Ra Armed Forces,” *Haikakan Banak* 3, no. 73 (2012): 29, accessed 11 September 2016, https://razmavaraget.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/final-n3_2012.pdf.

⁴⁵ Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, “Meeting at the Ra Mod Administrative Complex,” accessed 11 September 2016, <http://www.mil.am/en/news/4090>.

became an intellectual center for the AAF. It is planned that INSS will serve as a foundation of the future National Defense Research University (NDRU).⁴⁶

As a result of over twenty years of hard work, today's AAF has established solid institutions to educate and develop leaders to perform effectively in the complex environment. The evaluation of challenges and analysis of foreign and own experiences will continually develop AAF educational system.

Current disposition of the Armenian Armed Forces

Based on the AAF's endeavor to improve the military education of leaders, the AAF has taken on a prominent role in perpetuating the future of Armenia. Despite the young age, the AAF has proven its effectiveness starting from the first days of its formation. Today's AAF is unique because of several factors.

First, the AAF is still based on conscript service. According to the "The Republic of Armenia's Law for Military Service," the service for the country is the constitutional obligations of the citizens of the RA. All male citizens are obliged to serve in the AAF starting from age 18 to 27 for two years.⁴⁷ After two years of service, these personnel are

⁴⁶ Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, "Institute for National Strategic Studies after Drastamat Kanayan Mod, RA," accessed 11 September 2016, <http://www.mil.am/en/institutions/60/p/history>.

⁴⁷ The law defines the cases when the citizen can be excused from military service.

transferred into reserve forces, where they remain until the age of 50. While in the reserve, personnel can be called upon training several times until final retirement.⁴⁸

Besides compulsory service, the AAF has voluntary service too. The first requirement for entering the AAF as a “professional” serviceman, is to have two years of service as a conscript. The AAF offers volunteers several options for military service. First is military education through which volunteers can become officers or NCO’s. Second is a career as an enlisted soldier.⁴⁹ Today’s AAF policy encourages the professional service. One of the unique aspects of AAF is both required conscription and volunteerism. Despite the view that conscript soldiers cannot be as effective as professionals, recent skirmishes in the borderline showed the opposite. The vast majority of young soldiers show commitment and high willingness during their service. However, compulsory service requires laborious efforts to maintain combat ready forces. One of the challenges in the AAF remains the reforms in NCO Corps. By accepting a Soviet Army culture, the AAF remains an officer-led organization. Despite the fact that AAF’s NCO school started to develop leaders using western approach, the NCO’s role in the Army needs to be better defined.

Today, the AAF remains a dynamic organization with unique challenges. Having both conscription and voluntary based recruitment systems, the AAF strives to find the best options for maintaining high combat readiness while addressing issues. The AAF

⁴⁸ Headquarters, Department of the Army of the Republic of Armenia, “The Republic of Armenia's Law for Military Service,” accessed 27 September 2016, <http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=1658&lang=arm#7>.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

conducts regular training exercises involving both active and reserve components, which is a major step to enhance the capabilities of forces in order to develop the military education and defense system. Having limited resources, the AAF focuses on the quality of its units by using nation's intellectual potential. Consequently, the human factor with increased morale and a high sense of patriotism is the AAF's main "weapon." The AAF remains the sole guarantee for the security and the territorial integrity of the RA.

Primary and Secondary Research Questions

Currently, the AAF is conducting reforms in all domains aiming to increase combat readiness and the quality of forces. One part of the reform process is the mission command implementation. This research focuses on mission command, concentrating to answer the following questions.

Primary Research Question: Why should the Armenian Armed Forces adopt a mission command philosophy similar to American Army's doctrine?

In order to answer the primary question, following secondary questions will be examined.

1. What is the U.S. Army's mission command philosophy?
2. What are the potential challenges for the AAF in adopting the mission command philosophy?
3. What conditions does the AAF need to have for successful implementation of mission command?
4. What changes will the AAF need to implement in order to integrate mission command?

Assumptions

Following assumptions are necessary for this research:

1. The military-political environment of will force Armenia to continue to maintain large Armed Forces.
2. Conscript service will remain the primary way to maintain the Armenian Armed Forces.
3. The Armenian Armed Forces will encourage and enlarge the voluntary force.
4. As a part of the Armenian Armed Forces' reforms, the continuous development of an NCO Corps must remain a top priority.
5. The Armenian Armed Forces will continue to reform in the military education sphere.
6. The Armenian Armed Forces will continue successful cooperation with U.S. and NATO.
7. Armenia will continue to strengthen political-military cooperation with Russia and Iran.

Definitions of Key Terms

This section will provide information about the terms and definitions that will be used in this research.

Adaptability: Changes in behavior characterized by innovative or creative approaches in anticipation of, or response to, environmental changes appropriate to solve problems.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, "Advanced Operations Course, L209 Reading A, Developing Organizational Adaptability for Complex

Armenian Armed Forces (AAF): Formed in 1992, these forces include Ground Forces, Air Force, and Air Defense units. The term “Armenian Army” can be used as an equivalent for the Armenian Armed Forces.⁵¹

Army Values: The U.S. Army recognizes seven values that must be developed in all Army individuals: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, personal courage.⁵²

Art of Command: The creative and skillful exercise of authority through timely decisionmaking and leadership.⁵³

Auftragstaktik: German AR 100/100 describes Auftragstaktik as “pre-eminent command and control principle in the Army. It is based on mutual trust and requires each soldier’s unwavering commitment to perform his duty.”⁵⁴ Translated from German, the term *Auftragstaktik* means “task-oriented or mission-oriented orders.”⁵⁵

Environments,” September 2016, accessed 20 February 2017, https://cgsc.blackboard.com/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_6394_1&content_id=_468152_1.

⁵¹ Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, “Historical Overview.”

⁵² Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-22, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 3-1.

⁵³ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-0, *Mission Command* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), Glossary-1.

⁵⁴ German Army, Army Regulation (AR) 100/100 (Restricted), *Army Command and Control* (Bonn, GE: 15 October 1998), 302.

⁵⁵ John T. Nelsen II, “Auftragstaktik: A Case for Decentralized Battle,” *Parameters* (September 1987): 22, accessed 10 October 2016, <http://strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/Articles/1987/1987%20nelsen.pdf>.

Authority: The delegated power to judge, act, or command.⁵⁶

Blitzkrieg: German military tactic (German: “lightning war”) calculated to create psychological shock and resultant disorganization in enemy forces through the employment of surprise, speed, and superiority in materiel or firepower.⁵⁷

Command: The authority that a commander in the military lawfully exercises over subordinates by virtue of rank or assignment. Command includes the authority and responsibility for effectively using available resources and for planning the employment of, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling military forces for the accomplishment of assigned missions. Command also includes responsibility for health, welfare, morale, and discipline of assigned personnel.⁵⁸

Commander's Intent: The clear and concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired military end state that supports mission command, provides focus to the staff, and helps subordinate and supporting commanders act to achieve the commander’s desired results without further orders, even when the operation does not unfold as planned.⁵⁹

Creative Thinking: The conception of thinking in new, innovative ways while capitalizing on imagination, insight and novel ideas. Creative thinking leads to new

⁵⁶ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADP 6-0, Glossary-1.

⁵⁷ Raymond Limbach, “Blitzkrieg,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed 23 October 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/blitzkrieg>.

⁵⁸ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADP 6-0, Glossary-1.

⁵⁹ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, August 2011), GL-7.

insights, novel approaches, fresh perspectives, and new ways of understanding and conceiving things.⁶⁰

Critical thinker(s): Purposeful and reflective thinkers who apply judgment about what to believe or what to do in response to known facts, observations, experience, oral or written information sources, or arguments.⁶¹

Disciplined Initiative: The action taken in the absence of orders, when existing orders no longer fit the situation, or when unforeseen opportunities or threats arise.⁶²

Exercise of Mission Command (MC): is the idea that unifies U.S. Army's mission command philosophy with mission command warfighting function.⁶³

Mission Command (MC): The exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations.⁶⁴

Mission Command Philosophy: A philosophy to help commanders exercise authority skillfully and master the systems and procedures that help forces accomplish missions.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-0, *Mission Command* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 2-8.

⁶¹ Ibid., 2-7.

⁶² Ibid., 2-4.

⁶³ Ibid., 1-2.

⁶⁴ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADP 6-0, Glossary-2.

⁶⁵ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 2-17.

Mission Command warfighting function: The related tasks and systems that develop and integrate those activities enabling a commander to balance the art of command and the science of control in order to integrate the other warfighting functions.⁶⁶

Mission Orders: Directives to subordinates emphasizing the results to be attained, not how they are to achieve them.⁶⁷

Mutual Trust: The shared confidence among commanders, subordinates, and partners.⁶⁸

Operations Process: The major mission command activities performed during operations: planning, preparing, executing, and continuously assessing the operation.⁶⁹

Prudent Risk: A deliberate exposure to potential injury or loss when the commander judges the outcome in terms of mission accomplishment as worth the cost.⁷⁰

Science of Control: The systems and procedures used to improve the commander's understanding and support accomplishing missions.⁷¹

⁶⁶ Ibid., Glossary-3.

⁶⁷ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADP 6-0, Glossary-2.

⁶⁸ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 2-1.

⁶⁹ Ibid., Glossary-3.

⁷⁰ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADP 6-0, Glossary-2.

⁷¹ Ibid.

Unified Action: The synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort.⁷²

Unity of Effort: The coordination and cooperation toward common objectives, even if the participants are not necessarily part of the same command or organization—the product of successful unified action.⁷³

Scope

Because of the large scale of the mission command, and time constraint, this research will focus on the six principles of U.S. Army example of mission command philosophy. In order to describe U.S. Army's mission commands six principles, this research paper will include historical examples from U.S., German and Armenian military history.

Limitations and Delimitations

Several limitations exist for this study. First, this topic is relatively new for the Armenian Armed Forces. Thus, there is no specific literature concerning mission command that is released for a public audience in Armenia. The second limitation is limited information about the AAF. The majority of orders and directives within the AAF remains classified for public release. Nevertheless, there are several sources that confirm the determination of higher military leadership to adopt mission command as a main

⁷² Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, Glossary-3.

⁷³ Ibid.

command culture. Next, the study and analysis of mission command both as a warfighting function and as philosophy is broad and will require extended time. Because of time constraints, this study will specifically examine the principles of the mission command philosophy as practiced in the US Army only. Finally, this study may not offer concrete solutions to the problems or challenges that have been previously identified.

Significance

The significance of this study is the uniqueness of this research. At the beginning of 2017, Armenia's Defense Minister Vigen Sargsyan confirmed the determination to adopt the culture of mission command "as the main command philosophy." The idea of implementing the mission command philosophy became one of the major steps within the Army's development process. Although there is a desire and determination among AAF's high officials to adopt a MC culture, the specific challenges that the AAF will likely encounter during the adoption, adaptation and praxis processes has not been identified. Despite the fact that some of the principles of mission command have always been a part of the AAF culture, mission command is not formalized in the AAF.

This thesis is significant for several reasons. First, this paper will be one of the first studies concerning to mission command philosophy and the Armenian Armed Forces. Second, the analysis in this research paper may serve as an additional source for the Armenian Armed Forces to understand and visualize the areas and the problems that will be faced while adopting the mission command philosophy. Third, this study may be useful not only for AAF but for other militaries with a similar organization and culture.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Victory or defeat in battle changes the situation to such a degree that no human acumen is able to see beyond the first battle. Therefore, no plan of operation extends with any certainty beyond the first contact with the main hostile force... The advantage of the situation will never be fully utilized if subordinate commanders wait for orders, it will be generally more advisable to proceed actively and keep the initiative than to wait to the law of the opponent.⁷⁴

— Helmuth von Moltke the Elder,
Chief of Staff of the Prussian General Staff

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to answer the following primary research question: Why should the Armenian Armed Forces adopt a mission command philosophy which is similar to American Army's doctrine? The previous chapter introduced the current reality of the Republic of Armenia and Armenian Armed Forces. This chapter's general purpose is to describe the philosophy of mission command, using available literature. To do so, first, the U.S. Army approach to mission command philosophy will be reviewed. Second, the origins of mission command - the *Auftragstaktik* and American history of mission command will be examined.

U.S. Army Doctrine of Mission Command (ADRP 6-0)

In 2009 under U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Commanding General's supervision, U.S. Army changed "command and control

⁷⁴ Eitan Shamir, *Transforming Command: The Pursuit of Mission Command in the U.S., British, and Israeli Armies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Security Studies, 2011), 38.

warfighting function” to the “mission command warfighting function.” According to U.S Army doctrine, mission command is both a philosophy and a warfighting function.⁷⁵ Based on the limitation of this research, this chapter will illustrate the philosophical part only.

U.S. Army Doctrine Reference Publication 6-0 (ADRP 6-0) defines military operations as “complex, human endeavors characterized by the continuous, mutual adaptation of give and take, moves, and countermoves among all participants.” In the war each side has its objectives: all participants are striving to force their will to the opposite side. Besides, military operations are not being conducted in specific areas and at a specific time. Often, the civilian population has a significant impact on the outcome. The result is an uncertain and unpredictable environment that governs war. In these complex environment, human behavior has a central role. Commanders cannot always make accurate predictions about enemy actions. Even more, because of the effects of “stress, mistakes, chance or friction” it is hard to accurately predict the behavior of friendly forces. ADRP 6-0 emphasizes the importance of the commanders and their subordinates who are capable of acting effectively in the complex and uncertain environment.⁷⁶

To highlight the importance and the necessity of mission command, U.S. Army retired Lieutenant General Holder stated, “Because tight centralized control of operations isn’t possible or desirable . . . all regimental leaders must train their juniors to do the right

⁷⁵ Clinton J. Ancker III, “The Evolution of Mission Command in U.S. Army Doctrine, 1905 to the Present,” *Military Review* (March-April 2013): 42, accessed 21 September 2016, <http://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/documents/mccoe/TheEvolutionOfMissionCommandInArmyDoctrine.pdf>.

⁷⁶ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 1-1.

things and then trust them to act independently . . . Leaders must teach and practice mission orders.”⁷⁷

U.S. Army’s main mission is “to organize, train, and equip forces to conduct prompt and sustained land combat operations.” Unified land operations is the concept that U.S. Army uses to achieve its goals. While conducting tasks and operations which “exploits the initiative to gain and maintain a position of relative advantage,” the Army is guided by mission command.⁷⁸

According to ADRP 6-0, “mission command is the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander’s intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations.” The philosophy of mission command promotes the human ability to think independently and take the disciplined initiative. Accordingly, “centralized intent” and “dispersed execution” are the key tenets of mission command.⁷⁹

Under the philosophy of mission command, commanders understand their leadership guides the actions of the force. Commanders, assisted by their staffs, use the guiding principles of mission command to balance the art of command with the science of control. They use the art of command to exercise authority, to provide leadership, and to make timely decisions. Commanders and staffs use the science of control to regulate forces and direct the execution of operations to conform to their commander’s intent.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Richard Dempsey and Jonathan M. Chavous, “Commander’s Intent and Concept of Operations,” *Military Review* (2013): 62, accessed 15 January 2017, http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20131231_art011.pdf.

⁷⁸ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 1-4.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 1-4, 1-5.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 1-10.

As mentioned earlier, the nature of war is unpredictable. Hence, unexpected opportunities must be handled using immediate actions. The decisiveness and the resilience of soldiers on the battlefield can result in exploiting opportunities. By realizing there are no “perfect solutions” or “concrete answers” to problems, successful leaders “make timely adjustments in response to changes in their operational environment.” To function effectively, commanders generate shared understanding and mutual trust within their organizations. They empower subordinates by giving a clear commander's intent, facilitating freedom of action and by utilizing mission orders. Mission command requires disciplined and prudent actions from every Soldier.⁸¹

Mission command is based on the decentralized type of decision-making process; it requires training and education. ADRP 6-0 defines *six principles* that guide commanders to exercise mission command:

“Build cohesive teams through mutual trust” is the first principle of mission command. The military history constantly proved the effectiveness of the units that are unified and share positive beliefs and values. High morale and strong interpersonal relations not only ensures the cohesiveness but also reinforces positive climate within any military organizations. To build cohesive teams and promote Army values commanders will need to exercise leadership. As ADRP 6-0 states, cohesive teams can be built only by patient, arduous work, and interpersonal skills. One of the essential requirements for having cohesive teams is the existence of trust within the organization. Both, commanders and subordinates must trust each other in order to function effectively. In

⁸¹ Ibid., 1-1 – 1-5.

the environment of mutual trust, subordinates become willing to exercise initiative. Subordinates also are more efficient when commanders accept and support their decisions. Equally, commanders delegate authority to empower subordinates. Building and having cohesive teams through mutual trust is the first condition to exercise mission command philosophy.⁸²

Creating “‘shared understanding’ to operational environment, operation’s purpose, and problems” in order to form “unity of effort and trust” is a commander’s responsibility. U.S. doctrine stresses the importance of collaboration. Commanders and staff continually collaborate within the force and with partners outside their own military units through the operations process. They establish relationships, share information and use dialog to solve problems. Commanders gain awareness and perceptions by sharing their vision and intentions. To create the atmosphere of shared understanding is hard, but essential. With shared understanding, possible mistakes and issues can be avoided or resolved. Successful commanders allocate time to visit their subordinates, to have discussions and listen to their problems and concerns. Through collaboration the subordinates gain comprehension about commanders views and beliefs which eventually can reinforce the trust within the organization.⁸³

Joint Publication 3-0, defines the “commander’s intent” as a “clear and concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired military end state that supports mission command, provides focus to the staff, and helps subordinate and supporting

⁸² Ibid., 2-1, 2-2.

⁸³ Ibid.

commanders act to achieve the commander's desired results without further orders, even when the operation does not unfold as planned." The commander's intent normally includes the expanded purpose, key tasks, and military end state which serves as an initial impulse for the planning process.⁸⁴ The Commander's intent presents the general objective why the operation is being conducted. It supplements mission statement and explains the broad purpose of operation. Commander's intent helps subordinates to gain deeper understanding why the mission is being conducted. It serves as a basis for staff to develop plans and order. Properly articulated commander's intent delivers a "clear image of the operation's purpose, key tasks, and the desired outcome. With clear understanding of what the commander wants, subordinates are more likely to use initiative in uncertain situations. The U.S. doctrine states that commanders personally prepare and deliver the commander's intent to subordinates to ensure mutual understanding.⁸⁵

According to ADRP 5-0, "the commander's intent must be simple to remember and clearly understood by leaders and Soldiers two echelons lower in the chain of command." It includes the following components:

Expanded Purpose - addresses the broader purpose of the operations and its relationship to the force as a whole.

Key tasks - are those activities the force must perform as a whole to achieve the desired end state.

⁸⁴ Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP 3-0, IV-25.

⁸⁵ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 2-12 – 2-15.

End state - desired future conditions the commander wants to exist when an operation is concluded.⁸⁶

The commander's intent establishes guidelines to enable subordinates to exercise disciplined initiative. Leaders understand the need for initiative as "they cannot provide guidance or direction for all possible contingencies." ADRP 6-0 defines disciplined initiative as an "action in the absence of orders, when existing orders no longer fit the situation, or when unforeseen opportunities or threats arise." Commanders should expect disciplined initiative from their subordinates. By using their judgment, commanders can exploit opportunities. The willingness to act brings more opportunities to develop and maintain relative advantage during an operation. By knowing what the commander wants, specifically the purpose, key tasks and the end state of the mission, the staff and subordinates are able to think creatively and independently using disciplined initiative. As time is critical factor during the war, in uncertain and ambiguous situations commanders need to act fast. They must take necessary actions, which they think will bring the desired end state and will accomplish the mission within commander's intent.⁸⁷

As ADRP 6-0 states, "Leaders and Soldiers do not need to be told exactly how to accomplish missions." Subordinates are encouraged to solve unanticipated problems by "fighting the enemy and not the plan." Thus, subordinates are even allowed to deviate from orders when "orders no longer fit the situation." Subordinates are obliged to inform their commanders as soon as possible about deviating from the plan. By being

⁸⁶ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 5-0, *The Operations Process* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 2-19.

⁸⁷ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 2-16 -2-19.

empowered and using initiative, leaders and subordinates at all levels are compelled to adhere to applicable laws and regulations. Violations of applicable rules and laws must be avoided.⁸⁸

Commanders assign tasks, issue guidance by using mission orders. ADRP 6-0 defines mission orders as “directives that emphasize to subordinates the results to be attained, not how they are to achieve them.” The purpose of using mission orders is to give maximum autonomy that will encourage independent thinking and enable flexibility and individual initiative within subordinates. Using mission orders, commanders continue to supervise subordinates by giving direction and guidance. Mission orders “set priorities, allocate resources, and influence the situation” in order to achieve the main objective. It is important to mention that commanders are not supposed to micromanage. Commanders intervene only if there is a need to change or adjust the concept of operation or if the “nature of operation requires precise coordination.” Mission orders are intended to be brief and concise. It includes task organization, commander’s intent and the concept of operation, mission, task to subordinates units, and minimum essential coordinating instructions. Within tasks to subordinates units, commanders include information such as who, what, when, where, and why. An important part of tasks to subordinates is the purpose (why) of the operation. In order to empower subordinates and accomplish missions, commanders assign resources such as “people, units, supplies and services, equipment, networks, information, time... and establish priority of support.”⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 2-20 - 2-23.

Commanders are forced to accept prudent risk because of uncertainty and “fog of war.” Doctrine defines prudent risk as “deliberate exposure to potential injury or loss when the commander judges the outcome regarding mission accomplishment as worth the cost.”⁹⁰ According to Murphy’s Law, “whatever can go wrong, will go wrong.”⁹¹ In the same way, Carl von Clausewitz explains the friction and uncertainty as an inherent part of any military conflict. According to Clausewitz, the notion of friction distinguishes “the real war from war on paper.” Uncertainty and friction can have an adverse impact on forces, however, according to Clausewitz the “chance” can bring positive results if will be used wisely.⁹²

To capitalize on opportunities commanders are obliged to accept prudent risks. Doctrine stresses the difference between prudent risk and gambling. “Gambling, in contrast to prudent risk taking, is staking the success of an entire action on a single event without considering the hazard to the force should the event not unfold as envisioned.” That is why commanders strive to minimize damage by carefully analyzing risks. Commanders collaborate with subordinates by exchanging ideas to find a balance in taking risks. It is important to use risk assessment and risk management before taking the risk.⁹³

⁹⁰ Ibid., 2-24.

⁹¹ Shamir, *Transforming Command*, 11.

⁹² Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard, and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 17-18, 119.

⁹³ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 2-5.

Napoleon once said: “Engage the enemy and then see what happens.”⁹⁴

Commanders are encouraged to act decisively without losing time. The actions should not be delayed with the hope that time will clarify the situation. In uncertain and ambiguous environments, commanders should act rapidly using prudent risk, in order to “seize, retain, and exploit the initiative” over the enemy.⁹⁵

In summary, the U.S. Army has mission command philosophy has six principles. Today, the U.S. Army conducts operations based on mission command’s principles. Even though the concept of mission command is relatively new, history shows that the principles of MC have been an integral part of the Western Armies since the 19th century. To better understand the importance and the reason why U.S. Army formalized MC as a doctrine, the next sub-chapter will illustrate the origins and evaluation of mission command.

The Origins of Mission Command: *Auftragstaktik*

The origins of today's mission command can be traced back to the 19th century, where the Prussians developed this concept in order to overcome their enemies. This concept was a result of the disastrous defeat of Prussian forces at Jena and Auerstedt in 1806 by the French Army led by Napoleon Bonaparte. The need to modernize the Army became a prerequisite for Prussians, as they saw the ineffectiveness of their troops. The commanders of Prussian Army were not able to control their widely dispersed forces. In fast moving situations, officers were waiting for instructions from higher command,

⁹⁴ Clausewitz, 18.

⁹⁵ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 2-5.

which resulted in defeat. The conclusion was that Prussian leaders were not trained properly to act independently in an uncertain environment. To improve the Army's poor performance, Prussian leadership developed a new command system and were the first to institutionalize it. Later, this system became known as *Auftragstaktik*.⁹⁶

It was Gerhard von Scharnhorst (1755-1813), who saw the need for reforms and established first General Staff and Military Academy in the Prussian Army. The new command system replaced the old system and gave a new spirit to the Army. The growing quality of officers and NCOs, improved tactics and training became a reality in 1812 with the new infantry drill regulation. Through the new educational system leaders with independent thinking were formed. The Scharnhorst's reforms confirmed that detailed orders can not address every scenario. Scharnhorst believed that the best way to prepare the army is to educate leaders and then empower them to act independently. Consequently, commanders at lower levels were allowed to make decisions according to the situation. The successor of Scharnhorst – August von Gneisenau (1760 – 23 August 1831) continued to perfect this command system. The result was capable individuals with the power to make decisions.⁹⁷

Prussian Army Chief of Staff (1857-1888) Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke became an “inventor” of term *Auftragstaktik*. Von Moltke played a pivotal role in forming the concept of operational-level command and control.⁹⁸ Von Moltke was a

⁹⁶Nelsen II, “*Auftragstaktik: A Case for Decentralized Battle*,” 22.

⁹⁷ Shamir, *Transforming Command*, 34-36.

⁹⁸ Widder Werner, “Battle Command Trademarks of German Leadership: *Auftragstaktik* and *Innere Führung*,” *Military Review* 82, no. 5 (September 2002): 3-4,

genuine follower of Scharnhorst, hence he continued the reforms started around fifty years prior. He developed and institutionalized the new concept which was known as “the system of directive command [mission command].” The official doctrine promoted decentralized execution and individual thinking. Moltke believed Clausewitz thoughts on friction and chance having an impact on the battlefield, and that “success goes to commanders who can outmatch the enemy’s ability to exploit friction.”⁹⁹ Moltke’s strategy was dependent upon tactical opportunities which were fleeting during the battle. Moltke believed that if subordinates use those fleeting opportunities wisely, the outcome of the battle can be beneficial. As Shamir mentions in his book *Transforming Command*, “Moltke saw *Auftragstaktik* as a key process in the complex dynamics between strategy and tactics.” *Auftragstaktik* strongly emphasized “initiative, aggressiveness, and subordinate freedom of action.” Therefore, Moltke was encouraging commanders even at Corps and Division levels to judge the situation and act independently in accordance with the Commander’s intention.¹⁰⁰

With the evolution of warfare, wide dispersion of forces made impossible to assign the tasks and coordinate subordinate forces actions from the battlefield. Moltke preferred to make tactical decisions on the spot, rather than making detailed plans which

accessed 20 September 2016. <https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1P3-218626241/battle-command-auftragstaktik-and-innere-fuhrung>.

⁹⁹ Douglas A. Pryer, “Growing Leaders Who Practice Mission Command and Win the Peace,” *Military Review* (November-December 2013): 31, accessed 20 September 2016, http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20131231_art008.pdf.

¹⁰⁰ Shamir, *Transforming Command*, 26, 36-37.

were impossible to execute because of uncertainty and “fog of war.” By issuing general orders, the commanders were concerned about the tactical outcome:

Moltke refrained from issuing any but the most essential orders.

An order shall contain everything that a commander cannot do by himself, but nothing else.’ This meant that the commander in chief should hardly ever interfere with tactical arrangements. But Moltke went beyond this. He was ready to condone deviations from his plan of operations if the subordinate general could gain important tactical successes, for, as he expressed it, ‘in the case of a tactical victory, strategy submits.’¹⁰¹

To illustrate his innovative thoughts, Moltke published a series of essays introducing his approaches to tactics and operations. He also narrated instructive stories. One of these stories told about a major who was trying to defend his wrong decision claiming that he followed the rules and orders. The answer of Prince Frederick was: “His Majesty made you a major because he believed you would know when not to follow orders.” The result of Moltke’s passionate efforts was the raising popularity of *Auftragstaktik*.¹⁰²

Under Moltke’s supervision, the Prussian’s Army training and military education system went through several reforms. The commanders were given broad latitude to decide what kind of training their units need. The system was oriented not to assess the process, but the result of the training.¹⁰³ The diverse approach to solving tactical

¹⁰¹ Hajo Holborn, *The Prusso-German School: Moltke and the Rise of the German General Staff, Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 290-291.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 40.

¹⁰³ Martin Samuels, *Command or Control: Command, Training and Tactics in the British and German Armies, 1888-1918* (London: Franc Cass, 1995), 11.

problems was another way to highlight the importance of commanders independence.¹⁰⁴ Most of the leaders in Prussian Army were graduates of mediocre cadet schools. The officers had a tendency to ignore military education, complaining that the reality was different from what they learned. Moltke solved this problem by revising the educational program. The new system omitted the old bureaucratic procedures instead, offered revised approach to military service and tactics.¹⁰⁵

Despite *Auftragstaktik*'s initial success, in the early 1890s, a group of opposers argued about the effectiveness of it. John.F.C Fuller was one of the critics who condemned Moltke being heavily reliant into his subordinates. The opponents of the Moltke's philosophy considered *Auftragstaktik* a threat to discipline.¹⁰⁶ However, the concept had already been implemented in German wars of unification against Denmark and Austria in 1864 to 1866 and later against France in 1870-71s. As a result, "Auftragstaktikers" created the system which on the one hand gave independence of actions, but on the other prevented misguided actions from junior leaders.¹⁰⁷

Auftragstaktik was not only a technique for issuing orders, but also a leadership style that promoted an "image of soldiers." The Germans saw their subordinates not as

¹⁰⁴ Robert T. Foley, "Institutionalized Innovation: The German Army and the Changing Nature of War 1871-1914," *RUSI Journal* 147, no. 2 (April 2002): 84-90, accessed 25 October 2016, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03071840208446761>.

¹⁰⁵ Shamir, *Transforming Command*, 41-44.

¹⁰⁶ J. F. C. Fuller, *A Military History of the Western World*, vol. 3 (New York: Frank and Wagnall, 1956), 134.

¹⁰⁷ Werner, *Battle Command Trademarks of German Leadership*, 4.

robots that simply followed the rules. They were seen as individuals, capable of making sound judgments and independent decisions. With Auftragstaktik Germans combined military theory and praxis. According to Shamir, conceptual tenets of Auftragstaktik were as follows:

- The chaotic nature of the battlefield, the Clausewitzian chance, friction and uncertainty trinity, are inherent to war and should be considered as such
- Optimization of complex systems' subunit output requires an application of the concept of intent.
- Time is a critical factor: tactical command must practice short decision-making cycles.
- As the human capacity for the information processing is limited, the process should include selected subordinates.
- Technology can improve communications and information processing, but it lacks the human capacity for creativity and snap judgments.
- Motivation and commitment are strengthened by active participation and responsibility.

The author concludes that these concepts, founded by Germans in the 19th century, will remain valid as long as nature of warfare and human behavior will remain unchanged.¹⁰⁸

After the Second World War, Germans introduced a concept of *Innere Führung*, which is directly linked with the *Auftragstaktik*. The cornerstone of *Innere Führung* was the German soldier as an individual. According to German Army Major General Warner Widder, a soldier in the German Army is a free person. Hence, his dignity and fundamental rights are respected and guaranteed. Widder believed that “only the responsible citizen will act out of his own free will and the responsibility he feels toward the community.” Soldiers will put their life at risk only when they recognize the values of

¹⁰⁸ Shamir, *Transforming Command*, 15.

their community. Thus, the German Army's culture of *Innere Führung* not only stressed the central role of the Soldier but also linked the Army with civil society.¹⁰⁹

Starting from 1933 German Army began to use a new term called *Truppenführung* (Troop Leadership) which was based on regulations adopted in 1923. The *Truppenführung* was the evolution of *Auftragstaktik*, in particular, a combination of the best German military traditions and the new approach to maneuver warfare. The system which Germans were using was reinforced with values such as trust, professionalism, and personal initiative.¹¹⁰ The *Truppenführung* proclaimed that "war demands the free, *independent* commitment of every soldier from the private to the general." The result was an agile, cohesive "war machine that was the envy of the world."¹¹¹

Even though Germans were successful in the adaptation of decentralized command in their Army, the principles of *Auftragstaktik* were also ignored in some cases. One of the examples is the German failure in the Eastern Front near the gates of Moscow during Second World War. On December 1941, Hitler assumed the command of the headquarters that was responsible for the Eastern front. Hitler required detailed information from every commander down to the division in order to coordinate actions with the centralized style of command, which was counter to executing subordinate initiative. To show the importance of strict adherence to rules, Hitler dismissed his best

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 5.

¹¹⁰ Shamir, *Transforming Command*, 50.

¹¹¹ Martin Van Creveld, *The Art of War: War and Military Thought* (London: Cassell, 2002), 133.

commanders such Heinz Guderian and Gunter von Kluge. Both of them had exercised their professional judgment and acted with initiative under the Hitler's command.

Another reason why Auftragstaktik had suffered in German Army was the result of low standards of recruitment due to high casualty rate. Soldiers with incomplete military education and abbreviated training were not able to perform effectively. Despite the quantitative and qualitative deficiencies and the number of defeats and withdrawals, the German Army remained an effective fighting force. The ability of junior leaders to act decisively to the very end was the last tribute to *Auftragstaktik*.¹¹²

As Daniel Hughes states, “*Auftragstaktik* was more than a system of command; it was part of particular lifestyle typical of Prussian officers for more than a century.”¹¹³ As a result of Napoleonic Wars, and by inventing the concept of *Auftragstaktik*, the Germans were first to institutionalize and successfully implement a concept which later will serve as a basis for decentralized command in many Armed Forces.

US Army adoption of Mission Command

The research of the U.S. military history shows that the elements of the mission command philosophy existed in the American Army starting from mid-nineteenth century. American Generals such Zachary Taylor, Ulysses S. Grant, and John J. Pershing were successful in demonstrating decentralized command during their military career. United States Major Andrew Kissner's monograph “Roots of mission command in the

¹¹² Ibid., 52.

¹¹³ Daniel Hughes, ‘Auftragstaktik’, in *International Military Defense Encyclopedia*, ed. Trevor N. Dupuy, Vol. 1 A-B (London: Macmillan, 1993), 332.

U.S. Army,” highlighted that American Generals were successful in exercising the principles of mission command even before the Prussians. The reason why American examples of mission command were unknown until recent years was a result of “military infatuation” of European military theorists Jomini, Carl von Clausewitz, and Helmuth von Moltke. Kisser believed that both, American writers and theorists failed to use American examples of mission command as a place to study and learn lessons from it.”¹¹⁴

Even though American history has enough successful examples of mission command, Americans were captivated with European tactics and theory, in particular, German theories of Maneuver Warfare of the *Blitzkrieg* era. Because of this, Helmuth von Moltke's approach of decentralized command, *Auftragstaktik*, became a starting point to explore and adapt the culture of mission command in U.S. Army.¹¹⁵

The U.S. Army Field Service Regulations (FSR), which is considered the first U.S. Army combined arms manual was published in 1905. The FSR advocated several directions that are very similar to today’s philosophy of mission command. The manual contained following words:

An order should not trespass on the province of the subordinate. It should contain everything which is beyond the independent authority of the subordinate, but nothing more. When the transmission of orders involves a considerable period of time, during which the situation may change, detailed instructions are to be avoided. The same rule holds when orders may have to be carried out under circumstances which the originator of the order cannot completely forecast; in

¹¹⁴ Andrew Kisser, “Mission Command: The Historical Roots of Mission Command in the US Army” (Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2015), 1-5, 47.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 48-49.

such cases letters of guidance is more appropriate. It should lay stress upon the object to be attained, and leave open the means to be employed.¹¹⁶

The 1914 FSR, which was the modified version of FSR published in 1905 and 1910, highlighted the importance to act decisively in the absence of orders from higher command by understanding the commander's intent:

Commanders of subordinate units cannot plead absence of orders or the nonreceipt of orders as an excuse for inactivity in a situation where action on their part is desirable, or where a change in the situation upon which the orders issued were based renders such orders impracticable or impossible of execution.¹¹⁷

Consequently, the perception that mission command is new in the U.S. Army is not correct. The U.S. Army had a basic understanding of mission command's principles before World War I.¹¹⁸

By learning lessons from WWI, several FSRs were published in 1923, 1939, and in 1941. In 1923 FSR first time used the term decentralization and introduced the importance of initiative as "desirable characteristics of leaders." To stress the importance of individual initiative, the 1923 version stated: "neglect of opportunities will warrant more severe censure than an error of judgment in the action taken." The other versions of the FSR published before WWII were similarly advocating the same principles as was in 1923's version.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ United States Army, *Field Service Regulations (FSR)* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1905), 29.

¹¹⁷ United States Army, *Field Service Regulations (FSR)* 1914, 3.

¹¹⁸ Clinton, 43-44.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 44.

The 1944 and 1949 FSR's, published during and after WWII contained ideas similar to previous versions. Once again, initiative was mentioned as essential principal to conduct a different type of operations. The 1949 FSR stated: "Set rules and methods must be avoided. They limit imagination and initiative, which are so vital in the successful prosecution of war. They provide the enemy a fixed pattern of operations which he can counter more easily." This manual also included a paragraph that stressed the importance of mutual trust and decentralization within military units.¹²⁰

Other doctrinal publications from 1949 to 1962 had significant developments related to mission command. In the 1962 edition of Field Manual (FM) 100-5, the term "mission type orders" is used first time to show the importance of subordinate's freedom of action and individual initiative:

Orders must be timely, simple, clear and concise. Mission type orders are used to the greatest practicable extent, but should provide the commander's concept, or intent, to insure [sic] that subordinate commanders, acting on their own initiative, direct their efforts to the attainment of the overall objective.¹²¹

Field Manual 105-5 introduced the concept of "centralized planning and decentralized execution." To demonstrate the significance of decentralized command, subordinate's initiative, and the ability to make decisions, FM 105-5 stated:

Modern warfare demands prompt action, decentralization, and a high degree of individual initiative. Detailed instructions must frequently give way to broad direction which subordinates can interpret and implement in accordance with the situation which prevails at the time of execution.¹²²

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, February 1962), para 126d, 51.

¹²² Ibid., para 29b, 20.

The 1976 version of FSR was influenced from Vietnam War and 1973 Arab-Israeli War and gave limited attention to decentralized command offering only one paragraph. In contrast the 1982 FM 100-5 was considered the cornerstone for mission command in U.S. Army. This manual included all elements of mission command such as initiative, commander's intent, mission orders and decentralized execution of orders. These elements of mission command became essential components to succeed in the newly devised "AirLand Battle." Field Manual 100-5 noted: "Mission orders that specify what must be done without prescribing how it must be done should be used in most cases."¹²³

The chaos of battle will not allow absolute control. As battle becomes more complex and unpredictable, decision making must become more decentralized. Thus, all echelons of command will have to issue mission orders. Doing so will require leaders to exercise initiative, resourcefulness, and imagination—and to take risks.¹²⁴

In order to have a joint institution for training and doctrine, the U.S. Army, as a part of reforms, established the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) in July 1973. The purpose of the new Command was to "facilitate the integration of doctrinal developments, training, force structure, and weaponry."¹²⁵ As TRADOC's official website states, TRADOC transformed the Army into the "best trained, equipped, led, and organized modern land power in the world." TRADOC has four primary functions: Recruit and train Soldiers, and support unit training; Develop adaptive leaders-

¹²³ Clinton, 46-48.

¹²⁴ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 20 August 1982), 2-7.

¹²⁵ Shamir, *Transforming Command*, 102.

both Soldier and Civilian; Guide the Army through doctrine; Shape the Army by building and integrating formations, capabilities, and material. Today, TRADOC executes missions through six major subordinate centers and commands. TRADOC also has 32 Army schools that function under TRADOC's subordinate centers and commands.¹²⁶

The 2001 Field Manual 3-0 *Operations* was a result of the continuous development process. The manual included definitions for all elements of mission command. Individual initiative was introduced as “disciplined initiative.” The importance of mission orders and decentralization as important factors of the command were mentioned. Thus, the new FM introduced the concept of mission command which became the “central tenet” for military operations.¹²⁷

In 2003, mission command became official Army doctrine. The FM 6-0 originally titled *Command and Control* was changed to *Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces* by the Commanding General of the Combined Arms Center, Lieutenant General James C. Riley.¹²⁸ FM 6-0 had following four elements: commander's intent; subordinates' initiative; mission orders; resource allocation. FM 6-0 defines each of the elements, focusing expressively on commander's intent and mission orders.

The next phase of mission command's evolution was the idea to use mission command as a warfighting function. The term “command and control” was changed to

¹²⁶ United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, “The TRADOC Story,” last modified 21 July 2016, accessed 12 October 2016, <http://www.tradoc.army.mil/about.asp>.

¹²⁷ Clinton, 48-49.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

mission command in 2009. Then TRADOC commander, General Martin Dempsey decided that the old concept was too technology centered. Consequently, the new concept came to enhance the role of the human factor.¹²⁹ As a result, the mission command doctrine now integrates two concepts that are known as the mission command philosophy and the mission command warfighting function.¹³⁰

The philosophy of mission command promotes decentralization of command and decision-making process. This philosophy empowers subordinates by delegating power to judge, act, and command. The success of mission command requires a cognitive approach from commanders and subordinates. Moreover, trust and mutual respect are acquired for developing adaptive, self-determined leaders, who will be ready to act aggressively, using critical thinking, creativeness, and personal initiative. According to Shamir, mission command is not a technique, nor a procedure for issuing orders. Instead, mission command is a cultural phenomenon. A summarized list of cultural requirements for implementing mission command philosophy includes:

- Understanding of and adherence to higher intent and the potential tension with the local mission.
- Mutual trust based on professional competence (and not necessarily on acquaintance or relationship).
- Excellent communication based on shared understanding of doctrine
- High value on learning as expressed and emphasized in training and education.
- Tolerance for well-intended mistakes.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 49-51.

¹³⁰ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, para 1-8, 1-2.

- A propensity for action and initiatives.
- Responsibility link to authority.
- Belief in the authority of individuals to make sound judgment calls.¹³¹

The U.S. Army, indisputably, is one of the military forces that have succeeded with the implementation of mission command. Starting from the U.S. Civil War period, American Commanders have successfully used similar principles of mission command. With the first FSR published in 1905, the U.S. Army gradually developed a command culture that eventually became known as mission command. Today, mission command is the preferred style of command in U.S. and other modern Armies.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to review the literature concerning the U.S. Army mission command philosophy. U.S. Army ADRP 6-0 defines the mission command as “exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander’s intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders the conduct of unified land operations.” The roots of mission command can be traced to the 19th century when Prussian military leadership performed several reforms aimed to enhance the effectiveness of their military. The new concept was called *Auftragstaktik*, which translated from German means “mission type orders.” Starting from U.S. Civil War period, U.S. military leaders constantly used a command style similar to *Auftragstaktik*. Starting from 1905, the principles of mission command were developed in U.S. Army doctrine, which was formalized in FM 100-5 published in 1982.

¹³¹ Shamir, *Transforming Command*, 8-9, 25-27.

Today, mission command is preferred style of command in U.S. and other modern Armies.

Chapter 3 of this thesis will introduce the research methodology applied in collecting the necessary data and analyzing it. Chapter 4 will analyze the gathered information in order to answer the primary and secondary questions. The final chapter introduces conclusions and recommendations based on analysis of chapter 4. This chapter also will suggest the areas requiring further study.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the methodology that was used to examine and analyze the content that was illustrated in the previous chapter. As was mentioned earlier, the primary research question for this study is: why should the Armenian Armed Forces adopt a mission command philosophy similar to American Army's doctrine? To answer the main question, following secondary questions was analyzed and answered as well:

1. What is the U.S. Army's mission command philosophy?
2. What are the potential challenges for the AAF in adopting the mission command philosophy?
3. What conditions does the AAF need to have for successful implementation of mission command?
4. What changes will the AAF need to implement in order to integrate mission command?

Research Method

The author of this thesis used qualitative research method to analyze the U.S. Army understanding of mission command philosophy. Denzin and Lincoln in their *SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* describe qualitative research.

Qualitative research is situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. ... Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that

qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.¹³²

According to Mack, researchers use the qualitative method to collect evidence that may be used to answer the questions and produce findings. This is an effective method in understanding “complex reality of a given situation.” It offers the researcher an opportunity to examine a broad spectrum of social phenomena and find the solutions to the problems.¹³³

Data collection

Data that have been collected for this research was separated into three categories. The first category is the books and documentations that are available mainly in the Armenian language. This category was used to describe the Armenian Armed Forces and the reasons why does the decision was made to implement the philosophy of mission command in the AAF. The second category of data collected is the online sources provided the Combined Arms Research Library. These are U.S. Army publications, documents, different articles that illustrate the U.S. Army mission command. The third category of collected data is based on author’s experience from serving in the AAF over fifteen years.

¹³² Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005), 3.

¹³³ Natasha Mack et al., *Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector’s Field Guide* (Research Triangle Park, NC: Family Health International, 2005), 1-3, accessed 22 February 2016, [http://www.ccs.neu.edu/course/is4800sp12/resources/qual methods.pdf](http://www.ccs.neu.edu/course/is4800sp12/resources/qual%20methods.pdf).

Data analysis

For this study, the researcher used document analysis combined with Case study method. According to Bowen, Document analysis is “a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents – both printed and electronic material.”¹³⁴ The Case Study research method according to Creswell is one of the categories of qualitative research in which a researcher “explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information.”¹³⁵

The analysis was done with 2 steps:

1. The documentary analysis combined with case study method helped the researcher to analyze the U.S. Army principles of mission command using U.S. Army doctrine of mission command and other documents.
2. The AAF's doctrine and leadership's approach was analyzed to each of the principles of U.S. Army mission command. This enabled finding the possible challenges of implementing mission command in the AAF. Consequently, necessary conditions and changes were identified that the AAF will need in order to implement the philosophy of mission command similar to U.S. Army.

¹³⁴ Glen Bowen, “Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method,” *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, no. 2 (2009): 1, accessed 30 October 2016, http://www.academia.edu/8434566/Document_Analysis_as_a_Qualitative_Research_Method.

¹³⁵ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches* (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, 2013).

Limitations

This research contains several limitations. First, in order to understand the full picture of challenges and the conditions that the AAF will need while implementing the philosophy of mission command, there will be a need for border analysis. The desired scope of identifying gaps and requirements would be variables doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy (DOTMLPF-P). However, because of time constraint, the analysis will be done partially, concentrating mainly on leadership and doctrinal aspect of the problem. The second limitation is connected with limited documentation concerning to Armenian Armed Forces. The part of the material is classified or not available for the research purposes, which makes significant difficulties.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Mission command is a very commander-centric doctrine. It puts the commander in the center. The process is not at the center. The commander is. We do not say let the process drive the commander. We say, commander, you drive the process.¹³⁶

— General David Gerard Perkins,
The commander of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.

Introduction

The purpose of the previous three chapters was to introduce the problem, review available literature about mission command philosophy, and discuss the research methodology that will be used. The purpose of chapter four is to analyze available data and provide the findings. Chapter 4 is divided into nine sections. First six sections will examine each of the principles of the U.S. Army mission command philosophy regarding Armenian Armed Forces leadership and doctrine. Last three sections will analyze case study examples of mission command from U.S., German and Armenian military history. The next chapter will answer secondary questions, which will eventually bring to the answer of the primary question: Why should the Armenian Armed Forces adopt a mission command philosophy similar to American Army's doctrine?

¹³⁶ The U.S. Army Adjutant General School, "LPD - LTG Perkins - Mission Command 'What Are You For vs What is Your Unit For?," YouTube, 8 April 2016, accessed 27 January 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZsAUnt-30A>.

Building cohesive teams through mutual trust

Despite technological advancements and the evolution of warfare, the cohesiveness of the forces remains an important factor for maintaining effective fighting forces. The cohesiveness of units not only affects the morale and ethics of the unit, but also increases the leadership and training potential. Harmonized units have more chances to succeed in chaotic or fast moving situations than disorganized units. Advanced technologies, new weapon systems, refined training and doctrine, will not have an appropriate effect without stabilized units. Thus, cohesiveness can serve as a force multiplier.¹³⁷

The first requirement for having cohesive units is an environment with mutual trust. Trust is gained through strenuous effort, conducting actions, demonstrating personal qualities, proficiency, and integrity. To demonstrate dedication, integrity, and maximum performance, both subordinates and commanders need trust within their organizations. Subordinates are more enthusiastic to show personal initiative when they know leaders will support the outcome of their decisions. Leaders during their turn are expected to use their knowledge, shared experiences and training, to strengthen trust within their units.¹³⁸

Eitan Shamir, on his book *Transforming Command*, makes an interesting observation. Organizational leaders, who strive to reduce the chances of possible

¹³⁷ Brendan B. McBreen, "Improving Unit Cohesion: The First Step in Improving Marine Corps Infantry Battalion Capabilities" (The Commandant of the Marine Corps National Fellowship Program, 2002), 1-2, accessed 10 January 2017, <http://www.2ndbn5thmar.com/coh/mcbreen2002.pdf>.

¹³⁸ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADP 6-0, 2-1, 2-2.

mistakes by reexamining decisions, strict hierarchical supervision, and redundant decision-making process, are less productive. Besides slower decision-making cycles, people who serve in these organizations are less motivated and feel powerless. Quite the opposite, leaders, who exercise decentralized type of command, allowing subordinates at a lower level to be involved in the decision-making process, are more productive. Through decentralization, leaders enhance and strengthen the trust, accountability, and dedication towards the organization.¹³⁹

From the early days of formation, the Armenian Armed Forces leaders continuously managed to enhance the cohesiveness of the forces. One of the first reason of success during and after Nagorno-Karabakh War became cohesiveness and mutual trust that governed not only military forces but also whole Armenian Nation. Despite the initial success in building cohesive units and promoting trust, the AAF has unique challenges on its path. This can be explained in several ways.

First, the vast majority of Armenian military is still based on conscription. The constant changes of personnel and the lower level of education concerning draftees forces the commanders to use additional efforts in maintaining unit trust and cohesiveness. In these circumstances, both draftees and commanders need time for adaptation. To shorten the time needed for adaptation, the Armenian school program includes mandatory military classes for all students. These classes teach first military skills and provide minimal military knowledge essential for each soldier. Students visit nearby military units and shooting ranges in order to become familiar with future service. Every

¹³⁹ Shamir, *Transforming Command*, 16.

newcomer of the Armenian Army is expected to be prepared before he will be called to the Army.

Second, the Armenian Armed Forces similar to Armenian society has high-contrast culture.¹⁴⁰ For Armenians, personal relations are an important factor for building trust and establishing long lasting relationships. Since the Officer Corps in AAF has a central role, it is expected that each officer (especially serving in combat units) must have proper military education, knowledge, motivation, courage and leadership qualities. For being a successful commander within the AAF, besides having positional (legal) power, it is highly important to have personal power too. To prepare future officers, the AAF's military institutions has a demanding educational program. The primary emphasis goes to professional education, specific knowledge depending on chosen branch, and physical fitness. The cadets are expected to gain leadership qualities mainly by observing their commanders. The first classes of leadership start in qualification courses designed for company commanders. Thus, the newly commissioned officers have only general knowledge of understanding what leadership is which may be not enough in building a personal relationship. Thus, especially during the initial phase of duty, young leaders may face difficulties in building trust and organized teams.

Third, the AAF's NCO Corps is still in the process of development. Being an ex-Soviet state, the structure and culture of Armenian Armed Forces have similarities to

¹⁴⁰ According to anthropologist Edward T. Hall "Members of high-context cultures usually have close relationships that last for an extended period of time. As a result of these years of interacting with one another, the members know what the rules are, how to think, and how to behave, so the rules do not have to be explicitly stated. This makes high-context cultures difficult to navigate for those who do not understand the culture's unwritten rules."

Soviet (Russian) Army. Junior leader's limited responsibilities and restricted authority were a serious problem that needed to be changed. Starting from 2007, as a part of reforms, Army leaders adopted revised approach towards NCO Corps. With the help of U.S. and British advisory groups, the NCO school was established.¹⁴¹ Even though the school has positively affected the overall quality of junior leaders serving in the AAF, the time will be needed for reaching the desired result – having capable NCO Corps. The active involvement of junior leaders in building cohesive teams is one of the preconditions for success.

Fourth, trust building within the Armenian military requires constant attention and hard work. Dr. Duane C. Tway, Jr., describes the definition of trust as “the state of readiness for unguarded interaction with someone or something.” In this essence, the AAF needs constant analysis of the overall status of trust within the organizations. By forming a culture of tolerance and cooperation, by having leaders who will coach instead of managing the AAF can increase the trust significantly. The notion that senior leaders are more experienced, thus, they always have best solutions and smartest ideas are false perceptions. Empowerment of subordinates, assigning responsibilities, their involvement in the decision-making process are essential conditions in building trust and positive environment. Without a doubt, trust building should start from military institutions from the first day of military service.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, “The Visit of the Advisory Group of US and UK Experts,” accessed 10 January 2017, <http://www.mil.am/en/news/2725>.

¹⁴² Chris Hitch, “How to Build Trust in an Organization,” UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School, accessed 11 January 2017, <https://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/>

Martin O'Neil developed mnemonic that leaders may want to use for improving trust in an organization.

T = Teach. Teach everyone in the organization how things work; make it as transparent as possible.

R = Reward. Make sure reward systems align with corporate value and goals.

U = Unconditional support. Encourage innovation. Create an environment where mistakes are opportunities to learn, not to punish. Give employees permission to “think outside the box.”

S = Share information. Communicate clearly and frequently.

T = Trustworthy. Make commitments and keep them.¹⁴³

Despite challenges above, the unity and solidarity are one of the important characteristics of the Armenian Nation. Complex history, struggle for independence, adversary neighbors are all factors that forced the Armenians of the world to be unified. The example is Nagorno-Karabakh War, where the Armenians from the entire world acted side-by-side, showing an exceptional cohesiveness and patriotism. The cohesiveness along with high motivation and patriotism are strongest “weapon” of today's' Armenian Armed Forces.

executive-development/custom-programs/~/media/827B6E285F2141C49D407DF7E5F5A1C4.ashx.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 9.

Creating shared understanding

Creating shared understanding is essential for building trust, establishing positive working environment, and eventually achieving organizational goals. It empowers people to understand the requirements, challenges, expectations and tasks that the organization possesses. Shared understanding enables people to use personal initiative, make decisions by seizing fleeting opportunities. In a complex environment, shared understanding of the situation gained through various sources helps leaders and subordinates to take action, even if there is a lack of sufficient information.¹⁴⁴

U.S. and British researchers explain the definition of shared understanding as “the ability of multiple agents to coordinate their behaviors with respect to each other in order to support the realization of common goals or objectives.” According to U.S. Army Captain Krueger, the process of achieving goals through the concept of mission command does not mean letting everyone decide on their own what to do on the battlefield. Instead, mission command is “building a shared understanding of what is taking place, what resources are available to affect the problem, and what the expectation is for action.”¹⁴⁵

U.S. Army ADRP 6-0 stresses the importance of collaboration and dialog. Effective commanders share information, perspectives, and ideas to build trust and solve problems. Shared understanding helps to avoid misinterpretations and maintain up to date

¹⁴⁴ Nathan K. Finney and Jonathan P. Klug, *Mission Command in the 21st Century: Empowering to Win in a Complex World* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: The Army Press, 2016), 19-22, accessed 14 January 2017, <http://armypress.dodlive.mil/files/2016/04/mission-command-in-the-21st-century.pdf>.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

situational awareness. Through direct communication with Commander, subordinates gain a better understanding of the commander's leadership style and his or her intent.¹⁴⁶

The formation of Armenian Armed Forces coincided with the devastating war in Nagorno-Karabakh, which gave birth to the unique culture of the Armenian military. Forced to fight against outnumbered enemy, the AAF had no other chance rather than be unified. Both commanders and subordinates of newly formed Army were equally sharing the burden of war. Being a Commander in the Armenian Army means to be an example for subordinates. Commanders at all levels, including Generals, preferred to lead their forces mostly from the frontline. By neglecting doctrinal guidance to lead troops from command posts, Armenian commanders were successful in building strong cohesive teams with shared understanding. The commander was considered a “senior friend” to the subordinates, which, undoubtedly, enhanced the trust and devotion between each other.¹⁴⁷

Today's AAF continues traditions that were started twenty-five years ago. Commanders pursue their role of “senior friend” which enables a positive atmosphere for collaboration and dialogue with subordinates. To be a competent officer in the Armenian Army means to be a reliable friend, intelligent commander. Personal relations, daily interactions with soldiers and fellow officers are highly important. Not only military culture but also Armenian culture in general fosters personal relationship and

¹⁴⁶ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 2-2.

¹⁴⁷ Seyran Ohanyan, *Twenty First Century's Army* (Yerevan: Tigran Mets, 2007), 8-17.

collaboration. Despite gained success in creating collaboration and shared understanding, some challenges require proper analysis and efficient solutions.

First, implementation and adaptation of advanced technologies and communication systems can be beneficial for enhancing shared understanding. In this essence, Armenia's newly appointed Minister of Defense Vigen Sargsyan initiated the start of cooperation with innovative, high-tech companies aimed to develop Army's scientific-technical potential.¹⁴⁸ To provide proper and secure information flow thus, promote shared understanding, the Army will need to update its command and control (C2) system. Especially in brigade level and down commanders need secure systems that will enable to share information, gain situational understanding. The C2 systems similar to SIPRNET, (Secret Internet Protocol Router Network) NIPRNET (Non-classified Internet Protocol (IP) Router Network) or CPOF (Command Post of the Future) will enable lower level commanders to transfer classified information, utilizing different warfighting and planning applications. Command and control systems in lower echelons of command may save time, resources and most importantly, enhance information security and shared understanding.

Second, an effective feedback system can significantly improve information flow from lower echelons to higher, thus, allowing commanders make timely and efficient decisions. Distinguishing useful feedback or constructive criticism from negative criticism is important. The purpose of an effective feedback is not to judge or condemn

¹⁴⁸ Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, "Cooperation between Armenian MOD and 'Simonyan' educational program was established," accessed 14 January 2017, <http://www.mil.am/hy/news/4585>.

people. Instead, the purpose of feedback is to look at the past, collect appropriate evidence and information and make changes for better future.¹⁴⁹

With implementing effective feedback system, Armenian Armed Forces may improve performance too. Using constructive criticism may help to frame better decisions and enhance the performance of forces. It values the opinion of subordinates and motivates them to perform better. Feedback from commander to subordinate helps to improve relationships, remain aligned to goals, and avoid potential misunderstandings. Effective feedback helps to form learning organizations. It enables people to be productive by learning from each other aimed to achieve common goals.¹⁵⁰

Shared understanding in the AAF is a process that existed starting from the first day of its formation. Constant interaction between leaders and subordinates helps to strengthen the trust and share important information. The Armenian culture and culture of the AAF encourages personal relations thus, providing essential conditions for establishing the atmosphere of shared understanding. By implementing suggested changes, the AAF can enhance not only the flow of information but also, improve overall performance. Shared understanding of the operational environment remains one of the challenges of the successful adaptation of mission command.

¹⁴⁹ Coaching for Leaders, “3 Differences between Feedback and Criticism,” accessed 14 January 2017, <http://coachingforleaders.com/feedback-vs-criticism/>.

¹⁵⁰ Susan E. Wyse, “5 Reasons Why Feedback Is Important,” Snap Surveys, 1 July 2015, accessed 14 January 2017, <https://www.snapsurveys.com/blog/5-reasons-feedback-important/>.

Provide clear commander's intent

Commander's intent is a concise description of the expanded purpose of the operation, key tasks and military end state that needs to be achieved. It is not the summary of the concept of operation. Commander's intent explains briefly why the mission is being conducted and presents a clear picture of the desired conditions that needs to be reached. Through commander's intent leaders describe their vision, provide necessary insight that subordinates would need to accomplish the mission even if the plans and concept of operation are no longer valid for the given situation. In the absence of orders, in complex and ambiguous situations, subordinates use commander's intent to contribute to the mission accomplishment through exercising disciplined initiative.¹⁵¹

Commander's intent solely does not lead to mission success. The concept of operation along with mission statement are an inseparable part of the operational order. As U.S. Army Major Dempsey in his article states, "Commander's intent, when used properly, should bridge the gap between the mission and the concept of operations. A clear commander's intent enables a shared understanding and focuses on the overall conditions that represent mission accomplishment."¹⁵²

The Armenian Army's tactical manuals (FM) does not offer the exact equivalent of "commander's intent." However, these manuals contain the elements of "commander's intent" (purpose, key tasks, and the end state). To follow the example of U.S. Army in adopting the philosophy of mission command, the Armenian Army will need inclusions

¹⁵¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 2-3.

¹⁵² Dempsey and Chavous, "Commander's Intent and Concept of Operations," 62.

in the field manuals.¹⁵³ Clear articulation of commander's intent is essential for enabling the full potential of subordinates. In the ambiguous situations, when orders are no longer valid, subordinates are expected to take disciplined initiative and act according to commander's intent.

The Armenian Army's tactical manuals clearly define the tasks, purpose, the concept of operation and the mission statement where the elements of "commander's intent" can be found. The first instructions found in tactical manuals advocate using the content of the manual creatively, as the manuals are designed for general situations. Presumably, this means commanders can adjust the content of the manuals as needed. The manual does not restrict the use of additional information in the Operational Order. Thus, commanders can develop their intent further than the guidelines doctrine can provide.

The first challenge of using "commander's intent" is the absence of such term in the Armenian military terminology. To adapt the "commander's intent" in Armenian military U.S. practice can be analyzed and transferred into Armenian military vocabulary. Second, several inclusions are needed in tactical manuals, which will guide commanders to use "commander's intent" as an essential part of every operational order. The third and most time-consuming challenge is education, training and eventually the effective practice of "commander's intent." Leaders at all levels must be trained to use it not only during combat operations but on their daily service too.

Shown below is an example of commander's intent used in U.S. Army:

¹⁵³ Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, *Tactical Manual*, Part two (Yerevan: 2011), 47-55.

Expanded Purpose: Facilitate 3 ABCT seizure of Bayji (OBJ Tiger)

Key Tasks:

- Seize crossing sites.
- Neutralize enemy AT [anti-tank] systems.
- Pass friendly forces east from PL KILLEEN to PL VIRGINIA.
- Minimize collateral damage to bridges across the wadi system.
- BPT [be prepared to] to defeat enemy CATK in zone.

End state: Key crossing sites seized, enemy neutralized in zone, collateral damage minimized, and the battalion postured for future operations.¹⁵⁴

Exercise disciplined initiative

As was mentioned earlier, according to U.S. Army doctrine, the disciplined initiative is “action in the absence of orders, when existing orders no longer fit the situation, or when unforeseen opportunities or threats arise.” Subordinates exercise disciplined initiative within the commander’s intent to fulfill assigned missions by keep relative advantage over the enemy. Leaders at all levels act independently using creativeness, adaptability and imagination. Aggressiveness, improvisation and confidence are essential for catching “fleeting opportunities” in order to “seize, retain, or exploit the initiative.”¹⁵⁵

Commanders delegate maximum authority to subordinates, giving them a chance to act within the boundaries of commander’s intent. Despite delegating authority, commanders remain responsible for the outcome. Subordinates, on their turn, remain

¹⁵⁴ Dempsey and Chavous, “Commander’s Intent and Concept of Operations,” 63.

¹⁵⁵ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 2-4.

accountable to their commanders for an effective use of the delegated authority. Both leaders and subordinates apply necessary coordination, provide situational awareness in order to reduce confusion and possible misunderstandings. Despite the above-mentioned encouragements in using disciplined initiative and critical thinking, everyone is required to follow lawful orders. Commanders are allowed to deviate from orders when they are unlawful or no longer valid for the given situation.¹⁵⁶

Steven R. Covey discusses five levels of power delegation by leaders that allows subordinates to exercise either no initiative or high level of initiative:

Level 1. Wait until told - Do not do anything until I tell you.

Level 2. Ask - You see a problem, ask me about it. Ask me what to do.

Level 3. Recommend - Bring me a problem, and bring me your recommendation along with it.

Level 4. Do it, and report immediately - So if there is a mistake, it can be fixed immediately.

Level 5. Do it, and report routinely - That is the full delegation.¹⁵⁷

Levels 1 and 2 are low productive and do not demonstrate initiative by subordinates, thus, these levels should be avoided if possible. Mission command philosophy requires delegation of authority similar to levels 3 to 5. Enabling disciplined initiative in Armenian Armed Forces requires extensive, time-consuming efforts. In order

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Mack Story, “5 Levels of High Impact Delegation,” LinkedIn, 29 December 2014, accessed 26 April 2017, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/5-levels-high-impact-delegation-mack-story>.

to make improvements, the AAF will need a series of reforms that will encourage creativeness, critical thinking, adaptability and disciplined initiative. The first and most challenging barrier that the AAF may face is misinterpretation and thus, resistance towards the idea of the disciplined initiative. The known fact that the Armenian Army was established based on Soviet Army legacy, the initiative and creativeness in some cases were considered unnecessary or even harmful.

Strict subordination, precise execution of given orders are expected from each member of the AAF. The policy of “zero tolerance” towards defects or mistakes makes subordinates to think twice before taking innovative actions or use personal initiative to solve problems. This statement is arguable, as during and after Nagorno-Karabakh War, there are numerous cases where Armenian Commanders and Soldiers applied creativeness and bold decisions to solve. Personal initiative and freedom of actions are considerably encouraged in those units who carry combat duties in the borderline with Azerbaijan. Thus, building positive attitude within the Armed Forces towards the idea of “disciplined initiative” may be one of the greatest challenges.

The second barrier is the absence of necessary incentives in AAF’s tactical manuals that will foster personal initiative. There are only several provisions referring to initiative and freedom of action. For example, battalion and company level commanders are encouraged to give subordinates larger latitude of actions when there is not enough time for detailed planning. Another provision from tactical manual states that leaders are allowed to deviate from orders and modify decisions when situations change and received orders are no longer valid. In these circumstances, leaders make appropriate decisions

and report to higher command as soon as possible.¹⁵⁸ The AAF's tactical doctrine does not forbid the initiative, nor does it promote the importance of the disciplined initiative. Thus, on the way to establish atmosphere encouraging creativeness and disciplined initiative, the AAF's tactical doctrine, and other directive documents must be revised and augmented necessarily.

The third challenge concerns to the level of preparedness and the ability of the AAF personnel to use disciplined initiative. To understand how well Armenian Forces are prepared to use personal initiative and creativeness not only on the battlefield but also in daily service, detailed and unbiased analysis is needed. In order to exercise disciplined initiative, all personnel must be prepared to use the authority delegated from higher command wisely. The result must ensure productivity, quality, and successful accomplishments of tasks and missions. To prepare competent followers with a growth mindset, the military institutions located in Armenia may play a pivotal role.¹⁵⁹ All future leaders must be taught and trained to think creatively, using non-standard methods of solving problems. They must be confident that higher command will support their decisions despite the perfectness of the results. Similar to General Eisenhower belief, "decisions had to be made at every level of command."¹⁶⁰ Mistakes while exercising

¹⁵⁸ Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, *Tactical Manual*, 37, 46.

¹⁵⁹ According to Robert Kelley, "Effective followers are individuals who are considered to be enthusiastic, intelligent, ambitious, and self-reliant." According to Carol Dweck growth mindset, in contrast to fixed mindset, is the belief that people can become intelligent through hard work and practice.

¹⁶⁰ Kerry E Irish, "Cross-Cultural Leadership: Dwight Eisenhower," in *The Art of Command: Military Leadership from George Washington to Colin Powell*, ed. Harry S. Laver and Jeffrey J. Matthews (University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 100.

disciplined initiative must be expected and tolerated. Educating and training adaptive leaders with critical thinking is essential for fostering disciplined initiative within the AAF.

Use mission orders

U.S. Army doctrine fosters mission orders in order to maximize subordinates freedom of taking action, accomplish missions, and achieve desired results. The central idea of using mission orders is to stress the results that commanders want to achieve, without telling how to accomplish them. Using mission orders technique does not mean leaders does not supervise and coordinate the actions of their units. Instead, leaders should set priorities, allocate resources and not micromanage. They trust subordinates and let them take bold, creative, and non-standard actions. Commanders intervene to subordinates actions only if close coordination or changes in the concept of operation are necessary.¹⁶¹

The Armenian Armed Forces use operation order format different from U.S. Army example. The main differences are in the structure, formulation of the mission statement and absence of clear “commander’s intent.” Also, the Armenian version has more directive approach when assigning tasks, and can include the “how” portion when assigning tasks to subordinate units. To use mission orders similar to U.S. Army example, the AAF may face several challenges.¹⁶²

¹⁶¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 2-4, 2-5.

¹⁶² Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, *Tactical Manual*, 51-52.

First, modifications in AAF's tactical doctrine is needed in order to use mission orders. As was mentioned before, mission orders are essential for enabling other principles of mission command. Even though the Armenian version of operation order has successfully served so far, it does not provide all key elements (commander's intent, mission statement) that are required for issuing "mission orders." Consequently, the U.S. Army example of operation order may serve a good illustration for making changes in Armenian model of operation's order. Proper analysis of both doctrines may help to understand the gaps, and consequently, offer changes that will enable efficient use of mission orders.

Second, the AAF's personnel must be trained to use mission orders both, in combat situations and during daily service. Leaders and subordinates must be able to comprehend mission orders received from higher command. Consequently, they must be competent to make their mission type orders, which will meet requirements for enabling decentralized execution of the tasks and missions. Commanders at higher levels must encourage subordinates using mission orders. This process should be implemented from top to down, making sure that each leader serves a good example for his subordinates. To ensure success, all personnel of the AAF should understand the importance of mission type orders and use it during daily service. If neglected, the expected results of decentralized command will be unsuccessful.

Accept prudent risk

Accepting prudent risk allows commanders to gain time, act decisively, and seize the "fleeting opportunities" that war offers. Often, in order to create opportunities and

gain a relative advantage against the enemy, leaders are forced to accept reasonable risks. Leaders do this by assessing, managing, and mitigating risks. Successful commanders cooperate and consider the ideas of their subordinates aimed to reduce the effects of risks. According to U.S. Army ADRP 6-0, “Commanders avoid delaying action while waiting for perfect intelligence and synchronization. Experienced leaders balance audacity and imagination with risk and uncertainty.”¹⁶³

U.S. Army ADRP 6-0 differentiates prudent risk from gambling. According to doctrine, “gambling, in contrast to prudent risk taking, is staking the success of an entire action on a single event without considering the hazard to the force should the event not unfold as envisioned.” Therefore, leaders must analyze and distinguish the level of the risks. Also, commanders take necessary actions to minimize those risks. Gambling must be avoided.¹⁶⁴

Accepting “prudent risks” has always been a part of the Armenian commander’s decision-making process. Being constantly engaged in combat operations the commanders regularly accept risks. Hence, the Armenian military culture fosters bold actions and audacity, which may not be done without taking risks. The Armenians use “the risk is half the effort” quote to stress the importance of prudent risk that each person should take in order to be successful. Despite the fact that AAF has the experience to accept prudent risks, several challenges need to be resolved.

¹⁶³ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-0, 2-5.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

First, commanders must encourage their subordinates to accept the prudent risk, without criticizing them for possible errors and mistakes. It is important to mention that risks exist not only during military operations but in daily activities too. Essential activities like combat drills, military exercises or even physical training contain some amount of risks. As already was mentioned, commanders must take all necessary actions to mitigate those risks and achieve desired effects. However, the practice shows that each realistic training may result in injuries or damage to the equipment. This does not mean training must be avoided or discouraged. Commanders must be confident, that higher command will not condemn their efforts and their actions will not be unnecessary criticized. While encouraging subordinates to take prudent risks, commanders must be ready to accept not only benefits but adverse effects too. A famous maxim says, “if nothing risked, nothing gained.” Unfortunately, there are leaders who prefer “if nothing risked, nothing lost” strategy, the benefit of which is maintaining status quo. In this essence, the AAF leadership needs to have a clear policy that will foster the environment where commanders would take risks without being afraid of possible punishment or criticism.

Second, the AAF’s tactical doctrine does not include the term “prudent risk” or equivalent. Current tactical manual encourages audacious activities enforced with determination.¹⁶⁵ The AAF’s doctrine needs augmentation to clarify what is “prudent risk,” and distinguish how it is different from gambling. This will ensure possible misinterpretations and will reduce the chance of unnecessary risks. Doctrinal clarification

¹⁶⁵ Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, *Tactical Manual*, 13.

will ensure that commanders know how to analyze and mitigate risks as well. Eventually, it will serve as a legal basis for leaders to accept prudent risk during military operations and in daily routine.

Third, the subordinates must be educated and trained to take prudent risk efficiently. The AAF's leader development system must guarantee the preparedness of leaders to accept prudent risks. Through education and training, commanders must be able to distinguish prudent risk from gambling. The AAF needs leaders who can critically think, are ready to adapt and act resolutely in ambiguous environment by conducting bold actions combined with prudent risk.

The Battle of Biazza Ridge (Case Study)

One of the heroic pages of American military history is considered the invasion of Sicily during in July 1943. The 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment's actions in Sicily is a remarkable example of mission command. The battle involved paratroopers of 505 Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82d Airborne Division at *Biazza Ridge* is one of the "masterworks" of U.S. military history. The battle at *Biazza Ridge*, led by Colonel James Gavin, is also a classic example that demonstrates the principles of mission command.¹⁶⁶

The invasion of Sicily (Operation Husky) was the continuation of successful military operations in North Africa. Both U.S. and Great Britain's political-military leaders made a strategic decision that was aimed to achieve three ends: cut the enemy's lines of communication in the Mediterranean, force Italy to withdraw from war, and

¹⁶⁶ Gregory S. Hospodor, "Sicily, 1943 Initiative Prevails at Biazza Ridge," in *16 Cases of Mission Command*, ed. Donald P. Wright (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2013), 89.

reduce the tensions in the Eastern front by distracting Germany's attention to the South. The operational plan, approved by General Dwight Eisenhower, included infantry, armored and airborne units. The Allied Forces were commanded by General Sir Bernard Montgomery (8th Army, Great Britain), Lieutenant General George Patton (7th U.S. Army). The II Corps, commanded by Lieutenant General Omar Bradley had four infantry divisions, one armored division, and the 82d Airborne Division. The 82d Airborne Division, commanded by Major General Matthew Ridgeway, had the mission to assist the attacking amphibious forces.¹⁶⁷

In May 1943, two months before the operation, the 82d Airborne Division was located in North Africa. The leaders used the time available to prepare the units for the approaching mission. The preparation phase taught subordinates to act decisively using personal initiative. The commanders knew that their subordinates would not be able to fight with their organic units during this operation. As a result, the idea to reorganize *ad hoc* elements became part of the training. Soldiers were taught to think and act creatively using an innovative approach that could accomplish the mission. The commanders taught their units how to use enemy weapons and ammunition, as the immediate resupply could not guaranteed. While keeping the invasion plan secret, the leaders insured to train subordinates with realistic scenarios. Night training was a permanent part of the preparation. The overall benefit of this preparation was high motivation, unit cohesiveness, and combat ready forces.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 89-90.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 91-92.

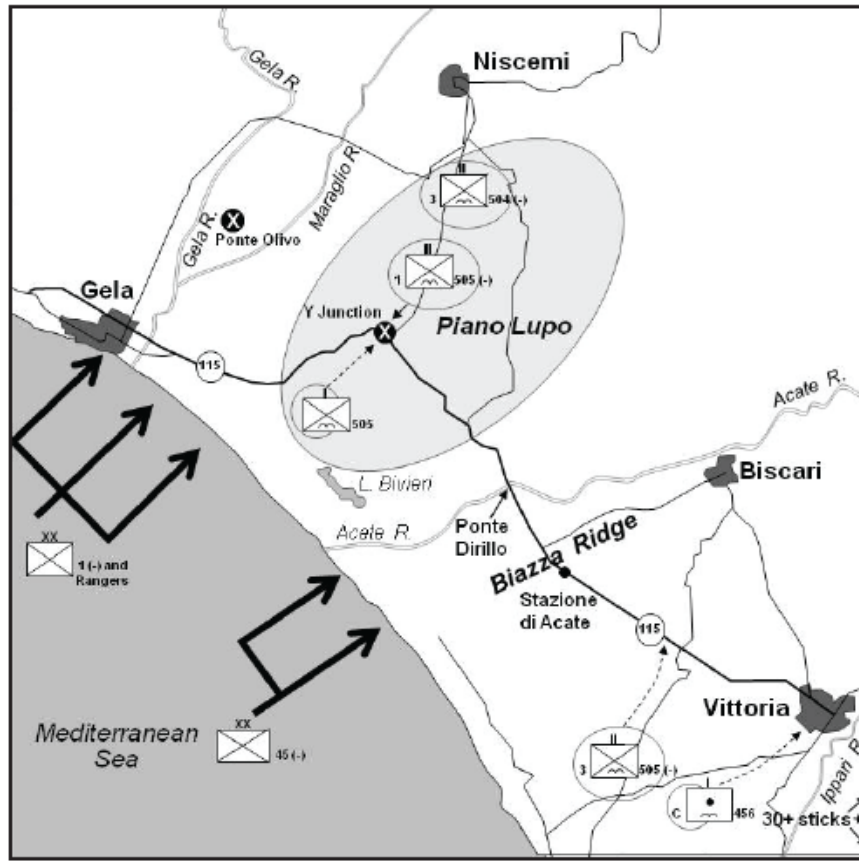


Figure 1. 82nd Airborne actual drops on Sicily

Source: Donald P. Wright, ed., *16 Cases of Mission Command* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2013), 91.

The 505th Airborne Regiment, commanded by Colonel James Gavin, was one of the units that ensured the success of the operation. Their mission was to seize the vital areas and interdict the enemy's counterattacks in order to assist the landing of amphibious forces. Initially, the plan was to drop the regiment to the high ground, called Piano Lupo, as it was appropriate both for landing and engaging the enemy. On the night of July 9-10, around 3400 paratroopers from 505th started their mission. Because of

inclement weather and poor navigation only 100 men were dropped near intended zones. The whole regiment was dispersed over 1000 square miles throughout Southern Sicily.¹⁶⁹

The commander of the 505th Regiment COL Gavin, just before embarkation, clarified his *intent* – engage the enemy, attack violently and destroy the enemy wherever found. His unit commanders and soldiers clearly knew the purpose of the operation. Consequently, COL Gavin established *shared understanding* within the regiment by encouraging his paratroopers to think and act decisively in the absence of specific guidance. By demonstrating initiative, these widely scattered units became a challenge for the enemy.¹⁷⁰

COL Galvin was dropped 30 miles away from designated zone. Initially, he found a small group of his soldiers. Unsure of where he was, he decided to move “to the sounds of guns.” Ignoring his leg injury, Gavin with his 20 men attacked an enemy platoon strongpoint and destroyed it losing only one soldier. Gavin’s team continued to move and engage the enemy. At the end of the day, Gavin still was not able to control his regiment. He thought the operation is going to fail. At nightfall, the group managed to find the 45th Division’s outpost. This linkup helped Gavin understand his location on the battlefield.¹⁷¹

As a result of linkup, the Piano Lupo was fifteen miles away. With his small group, COL Gavin continued his movement and soon found one of his units,

¹⁶⁹ Carlo D'Este, “Great Leaders,” *World War II* 26, no. 2 (June/July 2011): 30-33, accessed 14 October 2016, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=33f5a1c9-31c4-4eab-8f7a-2e7bfef3c38d%40sessionmgr4010&vid=1&hid=4112>.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 94-95, 103.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 96.

approximately with 250 men. He ordered them to continue movement and drafted a platoon of airborne engineers to move West to reconnoiter. Eventually, the unit found *Biazza* Ridge which was 30 meters above the surrounding area. While trying to seize the ridge, Gavin's engineer platoon was caught in the enemy's heavy fire. COL Gavin ordered the platoon to hold the position until reinforcements arrived. Gavin realized the importance of the ridge, by understanding that the mission could be accomplished on *Biazza* ridge. The seizure of high ground would disrupt the enemy and stop their ability to maneuver. Reinforcements of approximately 220 paratroopers arrived. COL Gavin assessed the situation and determined a successful outcome that could be reached. He was unaware that well-prepared units of Hermann Goering's Division were in front of his units. The enemy outnumbered the Americans in equipment, weapons, and personnel. The decision was made not to attack, but to establish a defensive line. This inhibited the enemy's ability to move towards the area where 45th Division was supposed to land.¹⁷²

This battle turned into one of the fiercest during the Sicilian campaign. The Germans repeatedly attacked, but could not defeat the U.S. defenses. American paratroopers were motivated and executed the training they received. As direct fire was not effective in destroying the enemy's tanks, the Americans began to improvise. They allowed enemy tanks to approach and managed to destroy them by firing at vulnerable parts from the close distance. Despite fatigue, the fighting spirit of the paratroopers remained high.¹⁷³

¹⁷² Ibid., 97-98.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 99.

While fighting continued, attached naval team managed to establish communication with their cruisers and destroyers offshore. A massive naval fire degraded enemy forces and allowed Gavin to counterattack the enemy. Gavin used all available forces to concentrate on defeating the enemy. He later wrote that “regimental cooks, clerks, truck drivers, everyone who could carry a gun,” made this victory possible. The bold decision to attack resulted in the defeat of the enemy. Gavin’s men captured numerous enemy weapons, mortars, tanks and armored vehicles. At nightfall on D+2, the *Biazza* Ridge was seized, and the mission was accomplished.¹⁷⁴

The battle of *Biazza* Ridge is one example of mission command from American military history. In an ambiguous situation, COL Gavin’s men were trained and able to exploit opportunities. The paratroopers of the 505th Regiment were able to act independently, without waiting for orders, because they understood their commander’s intent. The decision to hold and later to attack the enemy at *Biazza* Ridge was a result of Gavin’s ability to accept prudent risk and exercise disciplined initiative.¹⁷⁵

Capturing Eben-Emael (Case Study)

The capture of fortress Eben-Emael located in Belgium, during WWII, is one of the magnificent examples of the German Army’s mission command culture.¹⁷⁶ After invading Poland in 1939, Hitler’s plan was to invade France, the Netherlands, and

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 99-100.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 103-104.

¹⁷⁶ Nicholas A. Murray, “Capturing Eben-Emael,” in *16 Cases of Mission Command*, ed. Donald P. Wright (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2013), 143.

Belgium. During the invasion of Belgium, the Eben-Emael fortress was a serious tactical obstacle. The fortress protected the city of Maastricht from the North and three vital bridges over the Albert Canal. The success of the German invasion dependent on capturing these bridges due to their strategic importance. Both the capture of the bridges and the Eban-Emael fortress was important.¹⁷⁷

Eben-Emael was an impressive fortress built in a strategic location of Belgium. Located close to the German border this fort was designed to defend the country from a possible German invasion. This fortress had a complex defense system that made it nearly unconquerable. Being built on high ground, the diamond shaped fort had 400-meter anti-tank ditch from the West. Similarly, the Northern Wall had been constructed above the Albert canal which made a tank assault impossible. The walls and the underground bunkers were made of multilayer concrete which made the fortress practically invulnerable from artillery shelling or aerial bombing. The length of underground tunnels were nearly five miles. For defensive purposes, the fort had 120mm, 75mm artillery weapon systems, 60mm antitank guns, antiaircraft guns, and machine guns designed to provide multi-echelon fires.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ C. G. Sweeting, "Hitler's Secret Attack On the World's Largest Fort," *MHQ Magazine* (8 July 2012): 1, accessed October 16, 2016, <http://www.historynet.com/hitlers-secret-attack-on-the-worlds-largest-fort.htm>.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

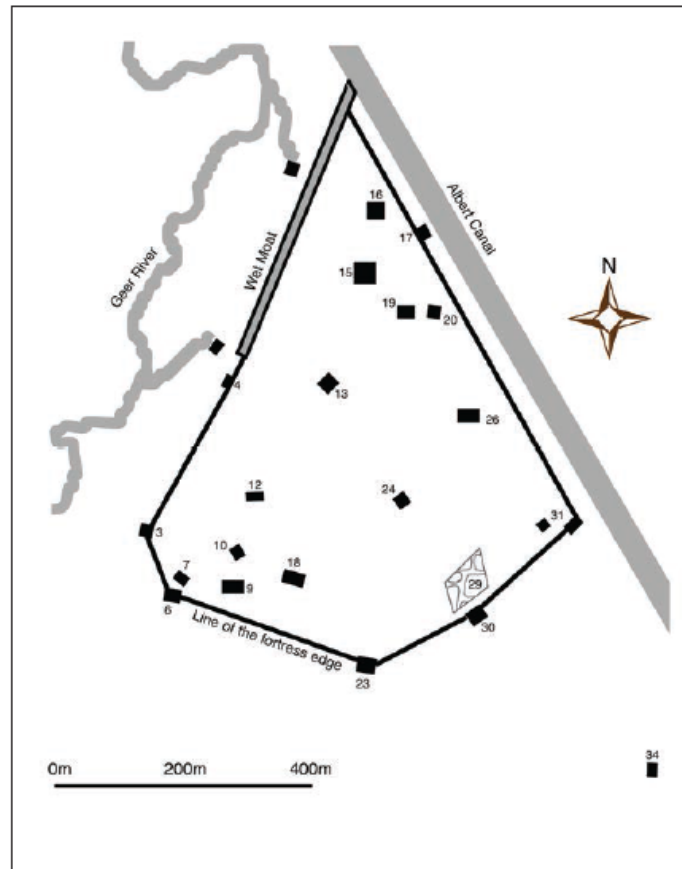


Figure 2. Fortress Eben-Emael

Source: Donald P. Wright, ed., *16 Cases of Mission Command* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2013), 146.

As historian Robert Mrazek states, Germans knew that conventional attack to Eben-Emael would take months and cost many human lives. Thus, the Germans planned and executed an operation that had never been conducted before.¹⁷⁹

The training began in November 1939, right after General Karl Student's 7th *Flieger* Division received a task to capture Eben-Emael in order to assist the German

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

Sixth Army's invasion of Belgium. General Student assigned Captain Walter Koch as the overall commander for this operation.¹⁸⁰ The operation involved 480 men who were divided into four groups – one for capturing the fort and three for seizing the bridges. The task to capture Eben-Emael was entrusted to 23-year-old Lieutenant Rudolf Witzig.¹⁸¹

Despite the young age, Lieutenant Witzig was an exceptional officer and commanded the paratrooper assault engineer unit known as *Sturmgruppe Granit*, which was deemed the most suitable unit for capturing Eben-Emael. Initially, he was given only a week to prepare, however, because of the decision to halt the attack until spring of 1940, Witzig was able to train his men thoroughly. He developed a comprehensive training plan and coordinated with Captain Koch who occasionally visited to see the unit's training. Koch did not interfere with the decisions of Lieutenant Witzig, who was proficient in his job. The trust between two officers helped Witzig to train the unit effectively. As a result, the platoon became flexible and innovative when it came to accomplishing the mission.¹⁸²

Lieutenant Witzig was tasked to train and make the plan of attack. He closely worked with his Non Commissioned Officer's (NCO's) which guaranteed cohesiveness and mutual understanding within the unit.¹⁸³ The plan of attack was kept secret. Accordingly, no leaves or vacations were allowed during the preparations. To conduct

¹⁸⁰ Murray, "Capturing Eben-Emael," 144.

¹⁸¹ Sweeting, "Hitler's Secret Attack on the World's Largest Fort."

¹⁸² Murray, 144.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

realistic rehearsals, Witzig used former Czech fortifications located in Sudetenland. The unit also used aerial photos to study the fort and surrounding area. A German contractor, who helped to build Eben-Emael, provided the blueprints, which Witzig used to build a model of the objective.¹⁸⁴

Witzig's men had a clear understanding what their task was as a unit. The commander gave them a task with clear mission order:

Capture by surprise the surface of Eben-Emael. To guarantee the transit of the Army over the Meuse-Albert Canal, neutralize the artillery and anti-aircraft casemates and turrets. Break any enemy resistance and hold until relieved.¹⁸⁵

During this operation, gliders were used in combat for the first time. The Germans wanted to surprise the Belgians and needed to get into the fortress without attention. The Germans knew that the fort was vulnerable to an air attack. Therefore, they found gliders appropriate for this mission as they were noiseless and were able to land right on top of the fortress. The limited capacity of DFS 230 gliders, forced Witzig to conduct his mission using 11 squads, with seven or eight men on each. The total number of the platoon was 85 men containing two officers and 28 NCO's.¹⁸⁶

Each squad was tasked to destroy one main target, and then continue to eliminate secondary objectives. Once the fort was in German hands, the unit would coordinate its

¹⁸⁴ Sweeting, "Hitler's Secret Attack on the World's Largest Fort."

¹⁸⁵ Murray, "Capturing Eben-Emael," 144.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 144-145.

action with Captain Koch's forces (tasked to capture tree bridges) in order to ensure German Sixth Army's river crossing.¹⁸⁷

The day of the attack chosen was 10 May 1940. Even though forces were meticulously trained, the mission had an unpredictable start. Two of the gliders were lost while being towed by the transport airplane. Both, the commander of the unit - Lieutenant Witzig (section 11), and the senior NCO - Sargent Maier (section 2) were on the gliders that had to conduct emergency landings far from the objective. The unit was without two important leaders for the operation.¹⁸⁸

Both Witzig and Maier demonstrated creativeness and personal initiative in this situation. Lieutenant Witzig ordered his glider pilot to land the glider in the area from where they could be lifted again. After landing, Witzig ordered his men to clear a temporary runway and rushed to find the nearest German air base. There he commandeered a transport plane and managed to get his glider to the objective several hours late. Similarly, without hesitation, Sargent Maier managed to find a way to get to the objective as well. He commandeered two small cars from the nearest town and transported his men towards the objective. He managed to cross the Meuse river with the help of German engineers, and commandeered another vehicle until they reached the Albert Canal. While trying to reconnoiter the canal, Sargent Maier was killed in action. Corporal Maier took over commanding the group.¹⁸⁹ Unable to cross the Albert Canal,

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid 145-146.

the section moved to one of the bridges and captured 121 Belgians in the process. The actions of this Corporal was a result of individual initiative, and creativeness, which was an integral part of German training and the military culture.¹⁹⁰

The plan to capture the fort had two sections in reserve (sections 10 and 11), and nine sections with specific tasks to perform once they landed. The glider carrying Lieutenant Delica, who was commanding the sections landed far from their objective. His squad focused on destroying a 75mm-gun casemate (refer to # 18, Figure 1). In this situation, the commander of the fourth squad Sargent Wenzel took the initiative and established the unit's headquarters in the machine-gun casemate (refer to # 19, Figure 1). Wenzel then established contact with Captain Koch in order to gain situational awareness.¹⁹¹

At the same time squad eight, under Sargent Unger command, tried to destroy a 75mm gun position (refer to # 31, Figure 1). Under heavy fire, the squad was not able to finish the task, and only with the help of the fifth squad, they managed to eliminate the target. The timely initiative of Sargent Haug, the fifth section commander, played a crucial role, as Belgian Soldiers were about to fire 75 mm rounds when the Germans destroyed it. Before assisting the eighth squad, the fifth squad had successfully neutralized their target: Anti-air guns (refer to # 30 Figure 1). Then, the squads destroyed gun positions forcing the Belgians to retreat.¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ Sweeting, "Hitler's Secret Attack on the World's Largest Fort."

¹⁹¹ Murray, "Capturing Eben-Emael," 147.

¹⁹² Ibid.

Other squads made improvisations too and successfully destroyed a couple of targets. The 120mm gun cupola (refer to # 24 Figure 1), and a 75mm gun casemate (refer to # 26, Figure 1) were targets assigned to squad two that could not reach the fort with the main forces. The fifth section's pilot Heiner Lange took the initiative and destroyed the cupola even though it was not his primary mission. Later, the fifth squad attacked and eliminated all targets assigned to section two. Sargent Wenzel, who took command in the absence of Lieutenant Witzig, ordered the tenth squad to attack and destroy one of the remaining enemy positions, which was done quickly and efficiently.¹⁹³

When Lieutenant Witzig's glider landed three hours later, the fort was partially in Germans hands. He assessed the situation and successfully assumed command of *Sturmgruppe Granit*. Under his command, the unit continued to destroy enemy strongholds in succession. Despite being short on ammunition and water, the unit had held their position for almost 24 hours longer than expected. The mission was accomplished with the support of German 51st Pioneer Battalion. As a result, the Belgians suffered 88 casualties. The remaining 1,000 Belgians surrendered inside the fort. The Germans had 24 killed or wounded, resulting in 28 percent casualties.¹⁹⁴ After the successful operation, Hitler personally met Captain Koch's officers and awarded them the Knight's Cross, the highest German award for bravery. Other NCO's and soldiers in the unit received the Iron Cross 1st and 2nd Class.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ Ibid., 148.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 148-150.

¹⁹⁵ Sweeting, "Hitler's Secret Attack on the World's Largest Fort."

The capture of Eben-Emael fortress and bridges over Albert Canal enabled the German *Blitzkrieg* invasion into central Belgium and later France. The result of mutual understanding and disciplined initiative, caused the Germans to succeed in capturing most defensible fort at a time. As Lieutenant Witzig pointed out, his unit's cohesiveness was based on "trust and loyalty from bottom to top and from top to bottom." The unit knew the overall purpose of the mission. The deviation from orders by Corporal Maier – the decision to attack one of the bridges instead of fulfilling their task because of a changing situation, showed that the unit knew the purpose of the operation. The clear commander's intent made the operation as simple as possible. All sections during the operation used personal initiative and creativeness. The unit was able to utilize the opportunities that rose during the operation, without waiting for orders. The operation was high risk, however, the decision was made to utilize gliders for the first time to surprise the enemy. The operation to capture Eben-Emael is an important example of the German Army's ability to exercise the principles of mission command.¹⁹⁶

Operation "Wedding in the Mountains" (Case Study)

The operation "Wedding in the Mountains" is one of the remarkable pages of Armenian military history. The armed conflict that started in 1988 between Soviet Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) Autonomous Republic resulted in the formation of numerous Armenian voluntary units. These small groups succeeded to provide both

¹⁹⁶ Murray, "Capturing Eben-Emael," 147, 150-154.

physical existence, and territorial integrity of the Nagorno-Karabakh.¹⁹⁷ Despite the fact that Azerbaijani forces had around ten times of numerical advantage in weapons and personnel, the Armenian forces managed to perform several military operations and force the Azerbaijanis to seek a ceasefire agreement. One of these remarkable military operations was the liberation of Shushi which occurred in May 1992.¹⁹⁸

Shushi is a city located 11 kilometers South-West of Nagorno-Karabakh's capital city Stepanakert. Due to geographical position, *Shushi* has a dominant position over Stepanakert and surrounding dwellings (Figure 2).¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ Minasyan, "Nagorno-Karabakh After Two Decades of Conflict: is Prolongation of the Status Quo Inevitable," 5.

¹⁹⁸ Arkadi Ter-Tadevosyan, "The Analysis of Combat Operations in Artsakh (July 1991 – July 1992)" *Studies on Strategy and Security*, 10 March 2007, accessed 19 October 2016, 551-553, 569. http://www.araratcenter.org/upload/files/Razm_&_Anvtang_17_ur.pdf.

¹⁹⁹ B. Karapetyan, "Encyclopedia of Armenian History - Shushi," Institute for Armenian Studies of Yerevan State University, History of Armenia, accessed 20 October 2016, http://www.historyofarmenia.am/am/Encyclopedia_of_armenian_history_Shushi.



Figure 3. View of Shushi City from South

Source: Aparaj.am, “Today Is Liberation Day of Village Qarintak,” 26 January 2015, accessed 14 February 2017, <http://aparaj.am/new/այսօր-քարին-տակի-հերոսամարտի-օրն-է-2/>.

During the initial stage of the war, Azerbaijani forces occupied the city. Azeri’s used Shushi to control the strategic routes that connected Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia. Starting from November 1991 until May 1992 around 15,000 artillery shells were dropped from Shushi into Stepanakert resulting a death of hundreds of civilians.²⁰⁰ In this critical situation, Defense Committee of Nagorno-Karabakh was forced to take actions that would deter the enemy’s hostilities. The governing positions, the number of

²⁰⁰ Tigran Devrikyan, “Liberation of Shushi,” *Hay Zinvor* Official newspaper of the Ministry of Defense of RA, 16 May 2012, accessed 23 October 2016, <http://www.hayzinvor.am/13421.html>.

troops and weapon systems concentrated in Shushi, made the chances of military activities theoretically impossible. The estimation was made that if all Armenian capabilities could be consolidated, then the enemy still would have superiority in artillery, tanks, and weapon systems.²⁰¹

The initial thoughts about the liberation of Shushi caused doubt amongst the political-military leaders. The operation seemed unachievable with given personnel, weapons, and resources. However, the unbearable situation forced the leaders to take a risk by attacking and defeating the enemy forces. The operation received the name “Wedding in the Mountains” since Defense Minister V. Sargsyan promised to get married if the outcome of the battle was successful. The commanding officer of the operation was selected Colonel Arkadi Ter-Tadevosyan.²⁰²

Before the offensive operation, a group of commanders in the head of Ter-Tadevosyan started deliberate preparation of the battle. First, multiple small groups were reorganized into four Battalion size units. Then, the leaders began training and rehearsals in order to enhance cohesiveness and interoperability. The mutual trust was present within personnel since most of the units were familiar with each other. Previous combat experience of the forces taught them to solve tactical tasks using imagination and creativity. Therefore, commanders and soldiers knew the importance of individual actions. During this operation, leaders used only mission type order, something that undoubtedly enhanced the potential of the forces. Later, Ter-Tadevosyan will

²⁰¹ Ter-Tadevosyan, 569-570.

²⁰² Later Ter-Tadavesoyan received a rank of Brigadier-Generals rank. The Armenians recognize him with his nickname “Commandos.”

acknowledge that success in Shushi became real because of individual initiative, coherence, and fighting spirit of the units.²⁰³

On 4th of May 1992, COL Ter-Tadevosyan gave the Operations Order to subordinate units. The commander's intent was short and clear: defeat the enemy in the vicinity of Lisagor, Charlsu, Janhasan, Karagyav and seize the objective Shushi in order to set conditions to clear the enemy forces from Berdzor region. The plan was simple, the execution – very hard, almost impossible. Because of unfavorable terrain, the doctrinal requirement was to have at minimum four times more forces in comparison to the enemy. The overall number of Armenian forces, including support and reserve units, were equal to the enemy forces (both sides had around 2800). The enemy had a huge advantage in heavy weapon systems and artillery. In this situation, the attack contained a high level of risk. Nevertheless, counting on high morale and personal initiative, the Armenian leaders made a decision to start the operation on 8 May 1992.²⁰⁴

The plan was made to attack the “fortress city” Shushi from 4 directions using one Battalion Task Force for each direction. The first Battalion (eastern direction) had a task to attack the objective from East and destroy the enemy in order to make favorable conditions for friendly forces to attack. The superior enemy forces initially could stop the advance of Armenian units. However, the First Company Commander Ashot Ghulyan deceived the enemy into choosing the high angle slopes of the hills to attack. Ghulyan's

²⁰³ M. Harutyunyan, “Liberation of Shushi,” Institute for Armenian Studies of Yerevan State University, accessed 23 October 2016, http://www.historyofarmenia.am/am/Encyclopedia_of_armenian_history_Shushii_azatagrum.

²⁰⁴ Devrikyan, “Liberation of Shushi.”

forces, with artillery support, managed to break the enemy's defense line and forced them retreat.

During the same time, the units from other three directions started their attack. The intention was to surprise the enemy by attacking their positions from where they could not expect. In this situation, commanders were not able to give instructions and orders. Junior leaders and soldiers, knowing the commander's intent, demonstrated creativity and imagination to break the enemy's defense line and force them to retreat. Caught by surprise, the enemy started to withdraw, leaving tanks, heavy weapon systems, and thousands of artillery rounds. The plan to let the enemy "escape" was done intentionally. While retreating, the enemy got trapped by one of the Armenian units commanded by Vardan Balayan. This group successfully infiltrated the enemy's rear from Berdzor's (southern) direction without being noticed. By understanding the purpose of the operation and commander's intent, Balayan's unit took the initiative and pursued the enemy, not allowing them to reorganize their formations and launch a counterattack.²⁰⁵

Operation "Wedding in the Mountains" became a turning point in Nagorno-Karabakh war. On 9 May 1992, Armenian units not only liberated Shushi but also set favorable conditions to follow the offensive operation and clear the enemy forces from Lachin region. The result was strategically important land border between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia. During this battle, Armenian forces lost 57 people in contrast

²⁰⁵ Harutyunyan, "Liberation of Shushi."

with enemy's 250. Azerbaijanis also left 13 prisoners of war, an enormous amount of arsenal and armament.²⁰⁶

The success of the operation was a result of courage, personal initiative, imagination, adaptability and creativity of Armenian forces. Deliberately planned operation was executed with decentralized command. Knowing commander's intent and having shared understanding of the situation, enabled subordinates to act without waiting for orders. Despite the fact that the operation contained a huge risk, commanders made sound decisions to mitigate the risk. Operation "Wedding in the Mountains" is one of the remarkable examples from Armenian military history that illustrates the effectiveness of decentralized style of command.

Summary

The purpose of chapter 4 was to analyze the principles of the U.S. Army mission command philosophy with the Armenian military leadership and doctrine. The analysis was done to highlight the potential challenges and conditions that the AAF will need in order to adopt mission command philosophy similar to U.S. Army. This chapter also introduced three examples of mission command from U.S., German and Armenian military history. The result of the analysis will be used in next chapter in order to make conclusions and answer the primary question of this research: why should the Armenian Armed Forces adopt a mission command philosophy similar to American Army's doctrine? The next chapter will also introduce recommendations and areas for future studies, aimed to promote adaptation of mission command philosophy in the AAF.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In times of change, learners inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists.²⁰⁷

— Eric Hoffer

American writer, social and moral philosopher

Conclusions

The purpose of the previous chapters was to answer the secondary questions of this thesis. Chapter 2 introduced the U.S. Army mission command philosophy, its evolution, and development. The analysis conducted in Chapter 4 was aimed to identify challenges, necessary conditions, and essential changes that the AAF needs for adoption, adaptation, and practice of mission command philosophy. The three case studies were aimed to highlight the principles of mission command using the examples from U.S., German and Armenian military history. This chapter summarizes the results of analysis, answers the main research question, and makes recommendations.

The desire to implement mission command philosophy in the AAF was reconfirmed on January 2017 by Minister of Defense Vigen Sargsyan. According to the defense development plan, the process of adoption, adaptation and initial praxis of mission command will be experimented in the AAF until 2020. For the implementation purposes, in 2016, Armenia's military officials had several meetings with advisory teams

²⁰⁷ Thefamouspeople.com, "99 Famous Quotes by Eric Hoffer, the Author of the True Believer," accessed 26 April 2017, <http://quotes.thefamouspeople.com/eric-hoffer-1354.php>.

from U.S and Great Britain. By implementing the philosophy of mission command, Armenian military leaders aim to enhance the combat readiness, develop the command system of the forces, which, eventually is aimed to overcome potential enemies.²⁰⁸

The development of the AAF that started in 1992, and continuous modernization efforts were critical processes aimed to ensure Armenia's territorial integrity and security of Armenians living in both Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Extensive geopolitical challenges forced Armenian political-military leaders to maintain a relatively large, technologically developed and highly efficient Armed Forces. The primary tasks of the AAF remains deterrence and defeat of potential enemies. In this essence, AAF's leaders made reforms aimed to solve complex problems using available (limited) resources. The important part of the reforms became the decision to adopt a new command system similar to mission command.

The analysis of this thesis showed that the status of the AAF has features and conditions that may foster the culture of mission command, but there are gaps and challenges that need to be resolved. Despite challenges identified in the previous chapter, the AAF may overcome those challenges if determination and an appropriate strategy will be applied. Below is the summary of the challenges and necessary conditions that the AAF needs for successful implementation of mission command.

One of the first and continuous tasks for the AAF is strengthening trust between commanders and subordinates at all echelons. Even though the level of trust can vary

²⁰⁸ Garik Harutyunyan, "The Armenia's Military Strategy Will Continue the Development of Strategic Deterrence System," Razm.info, 13 January 2017, accessed 31 January 2017, <http://razm.info/94780>.

between units or organizations, the AAF's higher leadership can largely influence the process of trust building. Trust building is a never-ending process, requiring prudent decisions and a balanced approach. Armenian military leaders need to foster trust by creating a positive environment where people can have confidence in each other. Strict control over subordinates, zero tolerance towards mistakes, toxic leadership, and overvaluing bureaucratic procedures instead of outcome or the ultimate result will hamper trust and reduce productiveness. Subordinates in turn should reinforce trust with dedication and professional approach towards their responsibilities.

Commanders and subordinates are expected to communicate with each other in order to create shared understanding. In both, military operations, and daily life, subordinates need to understand the commander's intent, his or her vision, the purpose of the tasks and the anticipated results. Commanders, in turn, are expected to listen and consider the suggestions and proposals of their subordinates. The common perception is that "Generals do not make mistakes," thus they do not need advice or suggestions from subordinates. This perception may degrade trust and diminish shared understanding. Subordinates at all levels must be able to provide input into the common objective. The AAF must create an atmosphere where people can communicate with each other constructively. Commanders and subordinates, despite the hierarchy, must be able to exchange opinions, discuss and explore multiple solutions to common issues.

The AAF needs doctrinal augmentations in order to provide clear commander's intent. The Armenian military terminology does not include the term "Commander's intent" similar to U.S. Army doctrine. Commander's should provide the expanded purpose of the operation, key tasks and the end state concerning friendly forces, the

enemy, terrain, civil considerations. Commanders should be trained to provide clear commander's intent, which allows the subordinates use disciplined initiative to fulfill their assigned tasks.

Enabling disciplined initiative within the AAF requires extensive efforts. On the one hand Armenian commanders are expected to loosen their control over their subordinates by giving them freedom of action and allowing subordinates to use personal judgment. On the other hand, commanders need to develop and train subordinates who can effectively use initiative and autonomy. Subordinates are expected to have a growth mindset, use independent and creative thinking. They must have the motivation and the desire to act within the commander's intent even when specific orders are absent. Subordinates must have the reassurance that leaders will accept and even will praise independent actions. To achieve the conditions and atmosphere where subordinates will use disciplined initiative, the AAF needs reforms in doctrine, education, and most importantly, in leadership culture. Enabling disciplined initiative among subordinates is the AAF's biggest challenge.

To foster the philosophy of mission command in the AAF, leaders must use mission-type orders, which will require the units to understand their specific mission within the commander's intent. The current Armenian tactical doctrine does not support the use of mission-type orders. Consequently, commanders do not have the expertise to use mission-type orders, like the U.S. Army. Armenian commanders at all levels should be trained to utilize mission type orders correctly along with "commander's intent."

Similar to "disciplined initiative," the AAF must enable an atmosphere where personnel will be allowed to accept prudent risk. Fear of making mistakes and being

condemned by higher authorities is the main challenge that Armenian leadership must overcome. The AAF's tactical doctrine advocates aggressiveness and decisiveness during military operations, however, the doctrine does not address accepting risk. This augmentation in the AAF's tactical doctrine is needed in order to advocate accepting prudent risks. Additionally, subordinates must be educated and trained to assess, mitigate and accept risks depending on the mission, situation and military necessity. The AAF's leadership must be ready to accept not only the benefits of taking risks, but also the possible costs of failures.

Besides the challenges that the AAF faces, there are also multiple threats that need to be considered. The first threat may become the higher leadership itself. Commanders who were educated and served for decades using directive or strict centralized command style may become a serious barrier. Leaders who are accustomed to “decide everything and for everyone” may not like the idea of decentralized command. Similar to the Prussian Army example discussed in the chapter 2, there may be people who will argue that whatever they learned in the past is the best practice and thus may think that mission command is a serious threat to discipline. The commanders who have a fixed mindset or a clear old-Soviet military convictions (centralized and authoritarian command style) would hardly like or accept the idea of a mission command philosophy. The assumption that the implementation process may have negative effects (side effects) may bring ambiguity and a false impression that mission command is an ineffective command culture. Thus, the danger that the concept of mission command may meet serious resistance needs to be thoroughly considered and mitigated.

The second threat is a possible misinterpretation of the principles of mission command from junior commanders (battalion level and down). If the process of mission command is adapted hastily, without analysis, surveys and experiments, there is a likelihood that leaders at lower levels will face contradictions and eventually find themselves in chaos. The changes should be done considering subordinate proposals and with their active participation. The implementation process of mission command will become more effective in the AAF if the burden of the junior leaders (at battalion and company levels) will be reduced. The commanders will be motivated to implement changes if they believe that the outcome will reduce the unnecessary procedures and enhance their ability to command their units effectively.

My analysis showed multiple gaps and areas that need to be improved if the AAF wants to adopt the philosophy of mission command. Despite the challenges, the AAF has several reasons to adopt a mission command philosophy similar to American Army's doctrine. First, the U.S. Army has had a leading role in adopting, adapting and practicing mission command. From 1905, the U.S. Army developed its doctrine advocating a decentralized command system. The culmination of this evolution became the birth of U.S. Army Doctrine Reference Publication 6-0, Mission Command. In 2010, the U.S. Army established the Mission Command Center of Excellence (MCCoE) as a part of Combined Arms Center (CAC) in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. This unique institution has

had an enormous input on studying, analyzing and offering solutions that enhance the effectiveness of mission command in the U.S. Army.²⁰⁹

Secondly, the AAF practices close military cooperation partnership with the U.S. military more than any other Western military. The State Partnership Program with the U.S. Army, particularly with the state partner Kansas National Guard, gives Armenians an excellent chance to learn, explore, and study the philosophy of mission command. The U.S. Army's lessons learned concerning mission command are valuable and can be highly beneficial for the AAF. Also, U.S. officials on several occasions have expressed readiness to continue military cooperation with the AAF, which gives the Armenians a chance to build long-term strategies for implementing mission command.²¹⁰

The analysis of this thesis has shown that the U.S. philosophy of mission command is the preferred example of command culture for the AAF. Even though the doctrine and the cultures of the two armies are different, the implementation of mission command philosophy is possible if several reforms and improvements are undertaken within the AAF. The following subchapter will propose recommendations that may help the AAF to implement a mission command philosophy in the AAF.

²⁰⁹ Raymond T. Odierno, "Mission Command Center of Excellence (MCCoE): Combined Arms Center," United States Army, Combined Arms Center, 17 March 2016, accessed 7 February 2017, <http://usacac.army.mil/organizations/mccoe>.

²¹⁰ Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, "Meeting at the RA MoD Administrative Complex."

Recommendations

Based on the analysis of this research paper, the AAF needs changes in order to implement the philosophy of mission command that is similar to the U.S. Army example. The AAF will need what economist Joseph Schumpeter called – “creative destruction.” Schumpeter used the term “creative destruction” to describe the importance of innovation mechanisms by which new production units change the old ones. Even though the existing system may work and give satisfactory results, the productivity and quality growth can be significantly enhanced if creative destruction is applied.²¹¹

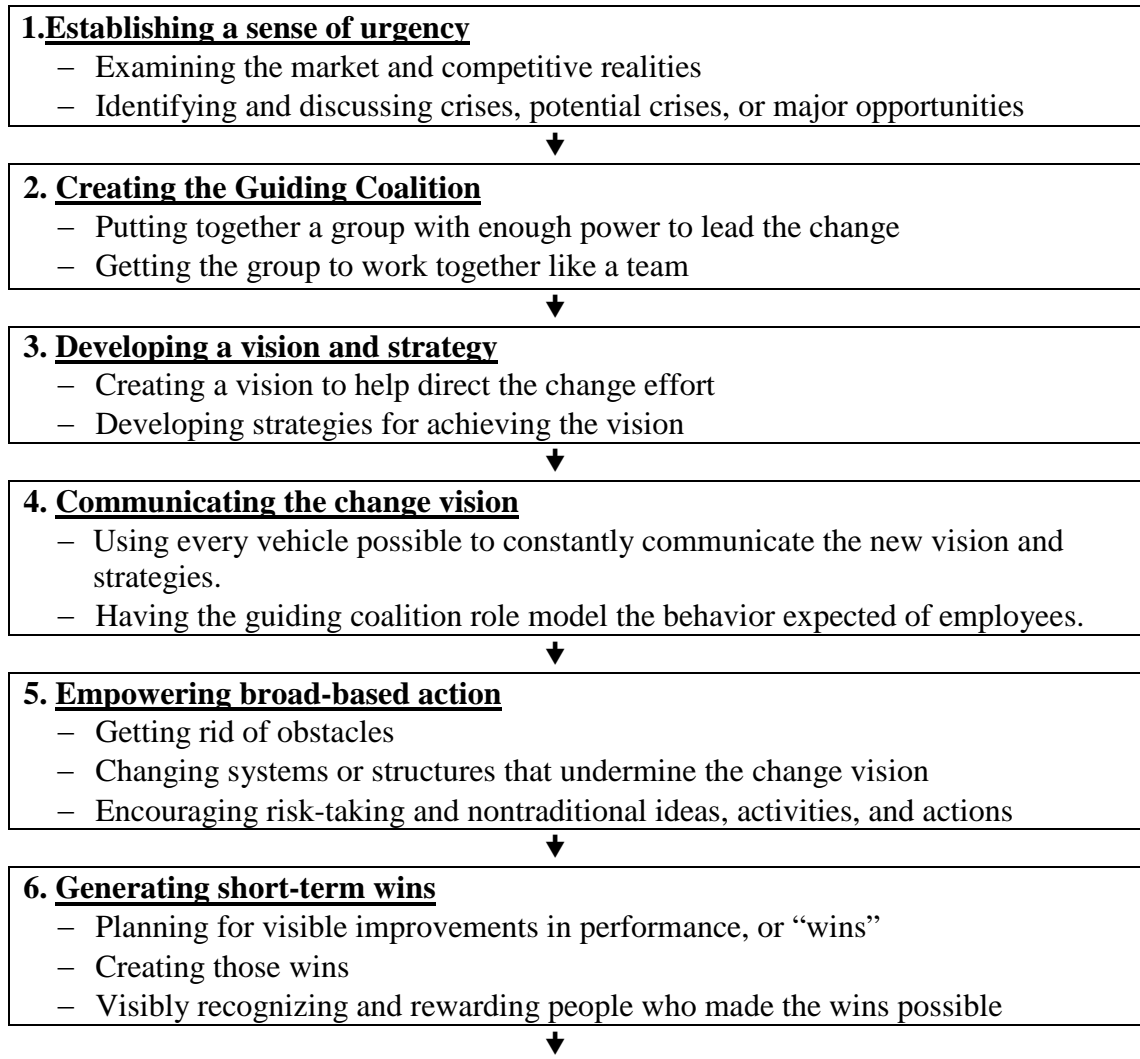
Military organizations, similar to economic institutions can use the concept of creative destruction in order to give new impetus, to increase the effectiveness and bring about desired results. Accordingly, the AAF needs bold actions that will gradually replace the existing command culture and shift existing paradigms. These actions should not be revolutionary in their nature. People within the organizations would not be happy to hear that nothing was working up to date. Consequently, the process of organizational change should be done by valuing the past and the people, which will help to minimize possible resistance. Researchers have shown that seventy percent of changes within the organizations fail. The reasons can be numerous: the lack of vision, poor teamwork, dictatorship, making rushed decisions, intolerance to unintentional mistakes, declaring success too soon and many other factors that can hamper the process of change.²¹²

²¹¹ Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: the Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*, repr. ed. (New York: Crown Business, 2013), 84-86.

²¹² Ken Blanchard, “Mastering the Art of Change,” *Training Journal* (January 2010): 44-47, accessed 6 February 2017, http://www.kenblanchard.com/img/pub/Blanchard_Mastering_the_Art_of_Change.pdf.

To initiate organizational change, the AAF may use Kotter's eight-stage process. John Kotter's book "Leading Change" introduced a model that can be used by leaders to manage transformational change.²¹³

Figure 4 illustrates the model that Kotter suggests.



²¹³ John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 23.

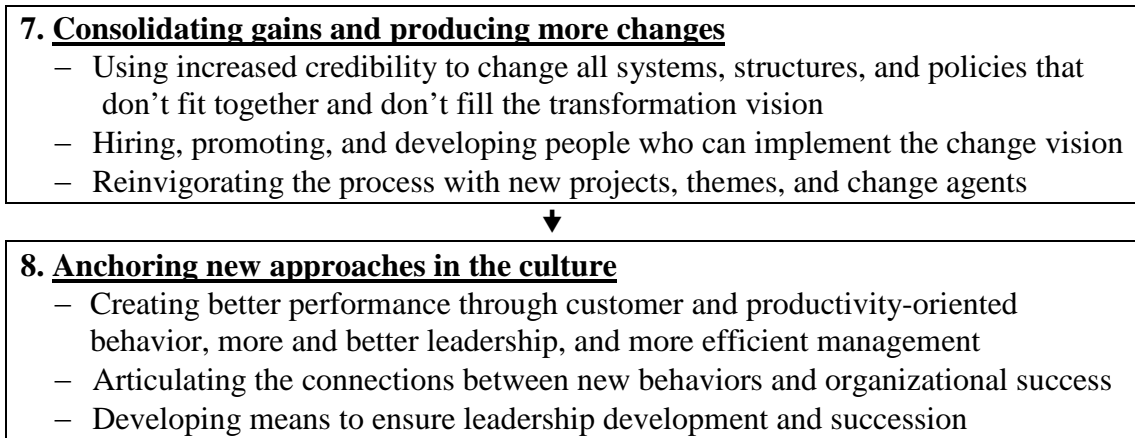


Figure 4. Kotter's Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Organizational Change

Source: John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 23.

John Kotter's model of organizational change is considered one of the most effective methods of changing organizations. During the last two decades, numerous organizations have succeeded using the eight distinct steps of Kotter's model. The AAF leaders could use this model for implementing changes. Therefore, one of the recommendations for future study will be the analysis of Kotter's model on how it can serve the AAF to make organizational changes.

Eitan Shamir on his book "Transforming Command," explains the process of the adoption of mission command. His main argument is that if one state (Cultural Context B) wants to take another state's example of mission command (Cultural Context A), the process of adoption, adaptation, and praxis has to go through the development process. As shown in Figure 5, two gaps will influence the development process. The first gap concerns the interpretation of the idea of mission command depending on the differences

between the two armies. The result of the first gap is the difference between an original idea (Context A) and the adopted doctrinal form (Context B).²¹⁴

The second gap, praxis, exists during the implementation process of the already adopted doctrine of mission command. Consequently, the main argument of Shamir is that “mission command, developed by one organization and adopted by others, has undergone at least two phases of transformation.”²¹⁵ Figure 4 illustrates the external and internal factors that the army will face while adapting and practicing mission command.

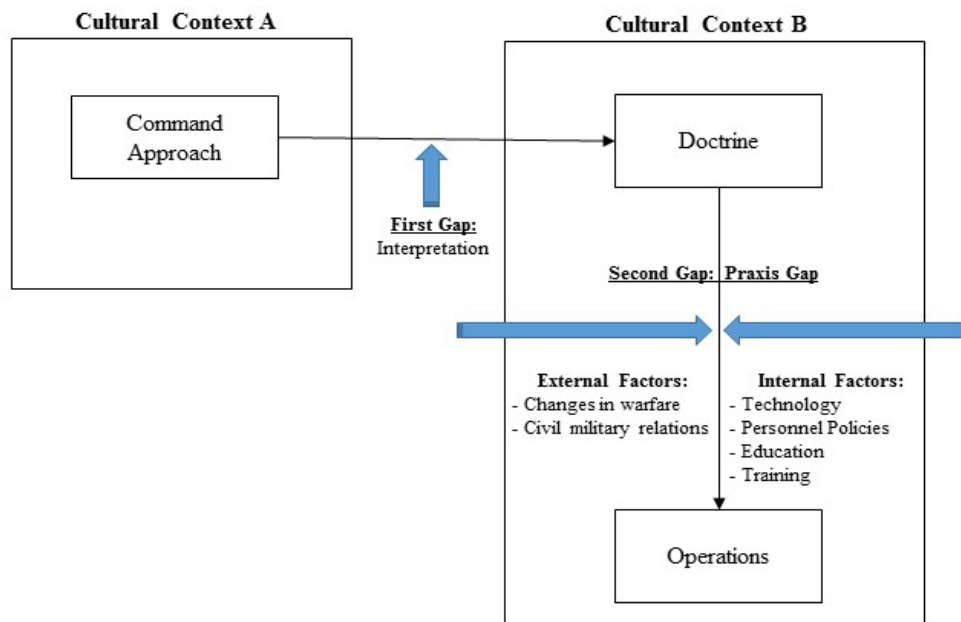


Figure 5. The process of adaptation of mission command through adaptation and praxis suggested by Eitan Shamir

Source: Created by author from Eitan Shamir, *Transforming Command: The Pursuit of Mission Command in the U.S., British, and Israeli Armies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Security Studies, 2011), 6.

²¹⁴ Shamir, *Transforming Command*, 6-7.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

The conceptual framework suggested by Shamir indicates that if the AAF uses the U.S. Army example of mission command philosophy as a base model, the result of implementation will not be the same as original version. The outcome may be similar; however, the existence of two gaps (interpretation; external and internal factors) discussed above, will largely influence the process of implementation of the mission command. Consequently, the AAF needs to consider these gaps, which includes; differences in culture, changes in warfare and civil-military relations; technological differences; training, education, etc.

Further research may need to be done to identify how various factors such as training, education, technologies, and leadership will influence the implementation process of mission command during the transitional phase. This will help the AAF leaders to identify risks and find solutions on how to mitigate those risks. As Gene Klann said, “The good news is that you don’t need to mine the depths of the earth for great leaders. You can develop the leaders you have.”²¹⁶ Indeed, the AAF has potential to develop leaders capable of exercising the mission command philosophy. To achieve this purpose, the AAF needs to demonstrate bold actions, determination, and commitment towards change and modernization.

²¹⁶ Gene Klann, *Building Character: Strengthening the Heart of Good Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 19, accessed 26 February 2016, <http://www.mfnco.com/e-library/books/Building%20Character.pdf>.

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